

MSU BROAD

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MSU Broad announces *Michigan Stories: Mike Kelley and Jim Shaw*, the First Exhibition to Place These Artists' Practices Alongside Each Other in Their Historical Context.

East Lansing, MI – *Michigan Stories: Mike Kelley and Jim Shaw*, on view from November 18, 2017-February 25, 2018 at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University (MSU Broad), is the first exhibition to feature together the work of lifelong friends and collaborators Mike Kelley and Jim Shaw. The exhibition will include works that span both artists' careers—from their youth to the recent past—that draw from the culture and iconography of their home state of Michigan, approaching their practice as parallel meditations on Midwestern subculture and American culture more broadly. The exhibition will show several never-before-seen works by both artists that illustrate the important influence of their Michigan upbringing and “education” on their practices.

Kelley (1954–2012) and Shaw (b. 1952) were raised in the Detroit area and Midland, MI, respectively, and met in Ann Arbor while pursuing undergraduate degrees at the University of Michigan, where they formed the collective Destroy All Monsters with fellow artists Niagara and Cary Loren. Murals from this proto-punk conceptual group will be on display in *Michigan Stories* and are rich with Detroit and greater Michigan cultural references, including Vernors soft drink, Iggy Pop and the Spooks, Motown, and the White Panther Party, to name a few. The recurrence of many of these images throughout the work of both artists suggests that their interests in them were life-long ruminations; the varied visual cultures and strategies they encountered in their youths continue/d to manifest in different and unexpected ways.

For Shaw, this is particularly evident in his collection *The Hidden World*—thousands of flyers, pamphlets, newsletters, objects, and other ephemera with zealous, Christian pedagogical leanings—which he began acquiring in 1969. This material has often spurred ideas and provided fodder for projects, not least of which his development of O-ism, a pseudo-religion for which he designed musical instruments and an initiation performance, which also tie into one of the primary threads of *Michigan Stories*: musical experimentation and ritual. Shaw's investigations of the relationship between memory, the subconscious, and imagination also provide insight into the lasting impact of the vernacular cultures of the Midwest, particularly through his *My Mirage* series that is part autobiographical, part fiction, part somewhere in between. A particular highlight of the exhibition (most of which have never before been exhibited), drawings and comics created by Shaw from when he was in high school will be an important opportunity in which to gain insight into the development of his own artistic language.

Broadening research possibilities and existing perspectives on Mike Kelley's work, *Michigan Stories* will debut a series of collages Kelley worked on until his unfortunate passing in 2012 that use drawings made while he was a student at the University of Michigan as source material. Dated over the course of almost 40 years (1974-2011), these works provide further insight into the ways in which Kelley returned to his early practice again and again in a constant recycling of influences, imagery, and materials. The student drawings used in these collages were also repurposed for his *Missing Time* paintings (1993-onwards), also on view, which examine the relationship between Repressed Memory Syndrome and his early, Michigan education on Hans Hofmann's compositional “push and pull” theory. A mash-up of styles and artistic conventions, these works feature reworked, vernacular symbols of the counterculture, and in their stylistic diversity are comparable to Kelley's early performances and experiments with sound. The exhibition will also include photographs, drawings, and mobiles that also cycle back to Kelley's complex project Educational Complex, which functions as a conceptual anchor for most of his early production.

Michigan Stories: Jim Shaw and Mike Kelley is curated by Director Marc-Olivier Wahler, Assistant Curator Carla Acevedo-Yates, and Assistant Curator Steven L. Bridges. Support for this exhibition is provided by the MSU Broad's general exhibition fund.

MSU Broad opened on November 10, 2012 on the Michigan State University campus. The dynamic 46,000-square-foot museum serves as a gateway between the campus and the world, providing a habitat for various community and operating as a lab for the museum of tomorrow, where develop new ideas are developed about museums, exhibitions, and art in a changing world. MSU Broad believes in the idea of the museum as open-source software: Constantly evolving and improving. Collaboratively developed. Flexible and interdisciplinary. Freely shared. A tool-kit for reinventing not just the museum, but our individual and collective identities.

Michigan State University has been working to advance the common good in uncommon ways for more than 150 years. One of the top research universities in the world, MSU focuses its vast resources on creating solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges, while providing life-changing opportunities to a diverse and inclusive academic community through more than 200 programs of study in 17 degree-granting colleges.

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