



For Immediate Release:

Joseph Buckley: *Traitor Muscle*
Art in General New Commission

Opening
Friday, September 21, 6–9pm

Exhibition
September 22–November 3, 2018

Art in General
145 Plymouth Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201
www.artingeneral.com

Press Contact
Eriola Pira: eriola@artingeneral.com
212.219.0473



Courtesy of the artist and Art in General

Art in General presents *Traitor Muscle*, a New Commission and the first major solo exhibition in New York by Joseph Buckley. The artist's practice centers on the relationship between grief and postcolonialism. Against a backdrop of contemporary fascism, Buckley employs a range of visual and cultural references—from sci-fi to modernism to Doc Martens to slave ships to Amazon's factory floor—asking us to deeply consider society's divisions and fractures, using the medium of sculpture to investigate the psychic technologies that enable them.

This body of work continues Buckley's investigation into historical, fictional, contemporary and speculative abuses that render people into "chattel, orcs, suspects, and clones." His ongoing research into the sources and symbols of feudalism, racism and imperialism infuse the work. Central to Buckley's practice is the use of "non-materials"—ideas, processes, people—manipulated in manners that mimic the archetypal languages and processes of sculpture. This lends itself to an ongoing critique and consideration of the mechanics of objectification, and the obverse of objectification: dehumanization.

Traitor Muscle centers around a trio of new sculptures. Standing at 9-feet tall and 12-feet wide, *Best Clone Sons* are fitted with riot gloves and yellow teardrops that function as a symbol of performative grievance. *Glass Aristocrat* is an optically clear figure who wears a fine suit and sits upon a custom-made replica of a Roman Senatorial throne depicted throughout Neoclassical painting. *Orcish Shelving System* consists of 64 life-sized orcs stacked atop one another, a fictional humanoid race originating in the writings of J. R. R. Tolkien which has become a widespread archetype used across the genres of sci-fi and fantasy. In addition to these works, each surface of the exhibition space features installation elements, including a floor with bright red and green delineations to suggest the logic and layout of an automated factory floor and a poem by the artist inscribed onto the window, confronting the hegemony of the artworld's whiteness.

Here figurative sculpture's art historical lineage is contrasted with up-to-the-minute materials, concerns and aesthetics. Visual references to medieval battle armor blend with forms from Star Wars and Warhammer. A genealogy of Doc Martens boot wearers from factory workers to skinheads to hipsters is recalled. *Traitor Muscle* points to obscured violences and mechanisms of exclusion everywhere embedded and naturalized in the world around us. The powerful and often unexpected combinations of references, symbols, histories and meanings employed by the artist give the work its striking resonance and allow it to speak clearly in speculative vernacular to real-world conditions.

Joseph Buckley is black British artist of Irish and Caribbean extraction who was born in 1990 in Ellesmere Port, England and currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Buckley studied at Leeds College of Art and Goldsmiths, University of London, graduating in 2010 and 2013 respectively. In 2013 he moved to the United States where he graduated from Yale School of Art in 2015. Recent exhibitions of his work include *Cellular World* and *Invitations to Forms* as part of Glasgow International, Scotland (2018); *Brotherhood Tapestry*, The Tetley, Leeds, UK (2017); *The Demon Of Regret*, International Studio & Curatorial Program, New York (2016); *Pervert's Lament*, as part of Time Item: Sculpture Thesis 2015, Green Gallery, Yale School of Art, New Haven (2015).

Art in General is a nonprofit contemporary art organization that assists artists with the production and presentation of new work. Founded in 1981 by artists, it has been a pioneering force unlike any other institution in New York City, supporting thousands of local and international artists early in their careers. Alongside Art in General's exhibition programs that take place in New York and internationally, its public programs and publications examine critical and timely issues in artistic and curatorial practice. Offering support that will have a lasting impact on artists remains the cornerstone of its vision and programs. www.artingeneral.org

General Support of Art in General is provided by the New York State Council on the Arts with support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; the Toby D. Lewis Donor Advised Fund of the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, The Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors; and by individuals. This program is also supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

The New Commissions Program is made possible by Henry Moore Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; Trust for Mutual Understanding; National Endowment for the Arts; Jerome Foundation; Greenwich Collection, Ltd.; Cowles Charitable Trust; and the Milton and Sally Avery Foundation. Support has also been provided by individuals and Art in General's Commissioners' Circle.

Special Project Support provided by DuckTape by ShurTech.

