

STALEY WISE

GALLERY

Press Release

September 27 - November 23, 2024

MICHAEL DWECK

BLUNDERBUST

Paintings + Photographs

Opening Reception:
September 26, 2024 (6-8 pm)



Michael Dweck’s childhood fascination with the stock car races he grew up with is reflected in this breakthrough exhibition of photographs and paintings – Staley-Wise Gallery’s first-ever show of paintings and a continuation of the gallery’s representation of Dweck’s photography work for more than 20 years.

Raceways were a vital part of the town culture when Dweck was growing up near Long Island. In 2007, he returned to the last remaining course track at Riverhead with its “Blunderbust” races. The racetrack served not only as his subject and studio for over ten years but also as a metaphor for a global cultural phenomenon: the erosion of concrete identity, the collapse of community institutions, and the decay of handmade objects. This work culminated in the photographs and paintings included in this exhibition and his 2018 directorial debut film *The Last Race*, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival that year.

Dweck notes, “The drivers were my heroes. The cars were their weapons, sculptures, flags and family crests rolled into one. The racetrack made me feel stimulated. It was the vocabulary of color, sound, texture, movement, form, and materials that got me excited.”

The race cars Dweck describes are hand-painted every week for years, accumulating hundreds of layers of paint. He observes that “Their streaked and scored bodies evoke canvases, recalling a kind of folk art - a hieroglyphic revealing their past. Every scratch is like a scar, a wrinkle, a laughter line – evidence of a life well lived.” With this inspiration, Dweck utilized power tools, metal, and automotive paints on aluminum “canvases” to create a testament to speed and sound. The works celebrate the scarred vibrance of the vehicles themselves while evoking the visceral excitement of the race from Dweck’s childhood memories and his nostalgia for a fading Americana.

Michael Dweck (born 1957) is a visual artist and filmmaker whose photography, painting, sculpture, and film work explores fragile subcultures. His photographic series *The End: Montauk, N.Y.* (2003), *Mermaids* (2008), and *Habana Libre* (2011) were each published in a solo monograph and featured in solo exhibitions at Staley-Wise Gallery and worldwide. Dweck’s photographs have also appeared in magazines including *Vanity Fair*, *VOGUE Paris*, and *Esquire*.

Dweck has directed several award-winning films, including *The Last Race* (2018), *The Truffle Hunters* (2020), and *Gaucha Gaucha* (2024). *The Truffle Hunters* was short-listed for the 2021 Academy Awards and his films have been selected to screen in over 45 international film festivals, including those at Cannes, Telluride, Sundance, Toronto, and New York. Dweck lives and works in New York City.

Press images available upon request

STALEY ♦ WISE

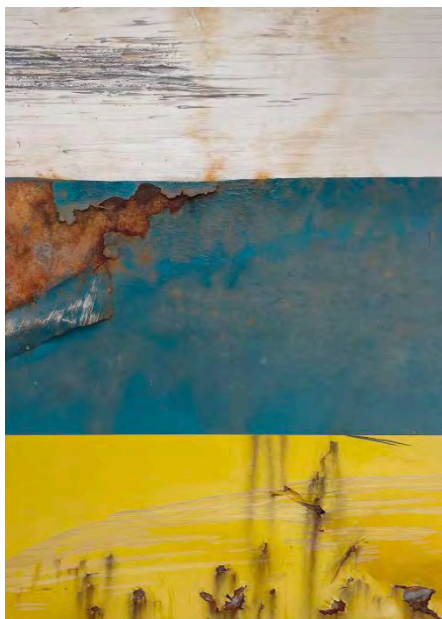
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Car 15, Riverhead, NY, 2007
 Chromogenic print
 20x24 inches / 51x61 cm



Blunderbust S-130, 2023
 Acrylic and oil on aluminum
 11x8.5 inches / 27x21 cm



Bing, Bang Boom, Blunderbust, 2023
 Paint, pumice, rubber, metal on aluminum
 84x60x2 inches / 203x152x5 cm



Scott's '77 Aerocoupe, Blunderbust, 2023
 Paint, pumice, rubber, metal on aluminum
 84x60x2 inches / 203x152x5 cm

Shown on first page: 1, 2, 3, *Go! (Blue), Blunderbust, 2023* Paint and pumice on aluminum 60x130x2 in / 152x330x5 cm