



# THE MYTH OF EDUCATION



Mike Cloud, *Removed Individual*, 2013. Image courtesy the artist and Thomas Erben Gallery, New York.

## **Logan Center Exhibitions presents *Mike Cloud: The Myth of Education*** **Critically-acclaimed Artist's First Solo Show in Chicago features Newly Commissioned Works**

**CHICAGO (December 12, 2017)** – From January 26 to March 11, 2018, Logan Center Exhibitions presents *Mike Cloud: The Myth of Education*, in which a suite of new works by the critically-acclaimed Brooklyn-based artist Mike Cloud will be on view. *The Myth of Education* marks Cloud's first solo exhibition in Chicago, a city to which he has deep ties, and the artist's first major solo institutional exhibition in close to a decade. For his show at the Logan Center Gallery, Cloud has created large-scale, three-dimensional paintings, newspaper collages, handmade collage quilts, and paper vessels to form an impressive Gesamtkunstwerk ("total art work").

"Mike Cloud's works are highly charged objects not only with respect to the artist's virtuoso use of geometry, gesture and color but also with regard to the sentiments they evoke, which range from humor, tragedy and fervor, to deference and hope," said Yesomi Umolu, Exhibitions Curator. "In our current moment, when we are all grappling with the symbolism embedded in our politics, monuments, institutions, and cultural artifacts, Cloud's work demonstrates the indiscriminate ways in which meaning is made and unmade in the world."

### **Media Contact**

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Born in Chicago in 1974, Cloud earned his training as an arts educator at the University of Illinois at Chicago and an MFA from Yale University School of Art. He moved on to pursue his career



Mike Cloud, *L of L*, 2016.  
Courtesy the artist and Thomas Erben Gallery, New York.

in New York. Cloud has evolved a unique painterly language that challenges notions of abstraction and often comprises a mash-up of cutout photographs, thick paint, and patchworks of collaged material. Cloud sees paintings as objects within a system of objects, and describes his own paintings as a “kind of microcosmic system of objects (toys, mazes, symbols, and painting materials), which although familiar within their own contexts, might combine into an overarching system of familiarities that create a kind of transparency of their own.” Using imagery culled from photo books, newspapers, and other ephemera of daily life, his works explore the expansive world of semiotics and the multiple cultural meanings embedded in familiar signs and symbols of our time.

In *The Myth of Education*, Cloud foregrounds his use of collage as tool to explore surface, pattern, composition, and meaning. Furthermore, the exhibition teases out the artist’s sculptural treatment of the picture plane. Sitting on the floor and leaning against the walls, his massive geometric abstractions break the conventional relationship between a painting and the wall. The negative spaces between these objects are densely filled with a selection of newspaper collages while a series of freestanding quilts hang in the gallery to articulate distinct yet surprising spaces and sightlines.

Accompanying the exhibition is a series of public programs, conceived in close collaboration with the artist, that explore the mythmaking capacity of art through three distinct vectors: storytelling and the myth of education; the myth of the “other” in art discourse; and the myth of quality in art criticism. These programs invite local and national interlocutors into conversation with Cloud, including artist Oscar Murillo, writer and curator Taylor Aldridge, and writer and editor Alexander Provan to connect the themes and motivations of the artist’s work to broader art historical narratives and contemporary discourses.

*Mike Cloud: The Myth of Education* is presented by Logan Center Exhibitions and curated by Yesomi Umolu, Exhibitions Curator. Support for this exhibition is provided by Harpo Foundation.

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## **Related Programming**

### **Opening Reception and Artist Tour**

Friday, January 26, 2018, 6pm (Logan Center Gallery)

### ***Painting, Offense and Judgment* with Taylor Aldridge, Mike Cloud and Alexander Provan, moderated by Yesomi Umolu**

Thursday, February 15, 2018, 6pm (Gray Center Lab, 929 E. 60 St.)

### ***Painter, Hero, Star* with Mike Cloud and Oscar Murillo, moderated by Yesomi Umolu**

Thursday, March 1, 2018, 6pm (Gray Center Lab, 929 E. 60 St.)



Mike Cloud, *Paper Elysium*, 2014. Courtesy the artist and Thomas Erben Gallery, New York.

### **About the artist**

Mike Cloud is a New York based painter whose work examines the conditions of painting in its contemporary life among countless reproductions, symbols and descriptions. Cloud earned his MFA from Yale University School of Art and a BFA from the University of Illinois-Chicago. A selection of exhibitions include: *'Special Project: Mike Cloud'* at P.S.1, NY; *'Agreement and Subjectivity'* at Max Protetch, NY; *'Jesse Chapman/ Mike Cloud'* at Marianne Boesky Gallery, NY and *'Bad Faith and Universal Technique'* at Thomas Erben Gallery, NY. His work has been included in group exhibitions such as *'Frequency'* at the Studio Museum in Harlem, NY; at Apexart, NY and Honor Fraser Gallery, CA. Cloud's works and writing have been featured in the New York Times, Art in America, Art Review and in the painting survey *Painting Abstraction* by Bob Nickas, published by Phaidon Press. He has been awarded the inaugural Chiaro Award from the Headlands Center for the Arts, CA; a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship and residencies at the Meulensteen Art Centre in the Netherlands as well as the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program in New York.

Cloud has lectured extensively on his work and issues of contemporary art theory at the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University, NJ; The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, MA; Yale University, CT; Cooper Union, NY; Bard College, NY and The University of Illinois- Chicago, IL, among others. He is currently an assistant professor at Brooklyn College/ CUNY in New York.

### **About Yesomi Umolu, Logan Center Exhibitions Curator**

Yesomi Umolu is Exhibitions Curator at the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago, where she is also a lecturer in the humanities division. Specializing in global contemporary art and spatial practices, Umolu recently curated *Kapwani Kiwanga: The sum and its parts* (2017) at the Logan Center Gallery. Prior to joining the Logan, Umolu was Assistant Curator at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at MSU where she curated *Material Effects: Contemporary Art from West Africa and the Diaspora* (2015-16), *John Akomfrah: Imaginary Possessions* (2014) and *The Land Grant: Forest Law* (2014) with Ursula Biemann and Paulo Tavares. Umolu was previously Curatorial Fellow for Visual Arts at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis where she curated *The Museum of Non Participation: The New Deal* (2013) featuring works by Karen Mirza and Brad Butler. Umolu has held curatorial positions at the 8th edition of the European biennial for contemporary art Manifesta and the Serpentine Gallery, London. Her writing has appeared in numerous catalogues and journals, including *Art in America*, *After image: The Journal of Media Arts and Cultural Criticism* and the Studio Museum in Harlem's *Studio* magazine. Umolu received an MA with honors in Architectural Design from the University of Edinburgh and an MA with Distinction in Curating Contemporary Art from the Royal College of Art, London. She is a 2016 recipient of an Andy Warhol Foundation Curatorial Fellowship. Umolu is a member of the board of trustees of the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, Chicago.

## **About Logan Center Exhibitions**

Logan Center Exhibitions presents international contemporary art programming at the Logan Center Gallery and throughout the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago. Reflecting the spirit of inquiry at the university, Logan Center Exhibitions focuses on open, collaborative and process-based approaches to cultural production. Working closely with artists, students, scholars and community members, Logan Center Exhibitions presents innovative exhibitions by emerging and established artists; supports ambitious new commissions and research projects; disseminates knowledge through publications; and facilitates connections through talks and other public programs.



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### **General Information**

Logan Center Exhibitions is located at:  
The Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts  
University of Chicago  
915 E 60th Street  
Chicago, IL 60637  
t: (773) 834-8377  
[arts.uchicago.edu/logan/gallery](http://arts.uchicago.edu/logan/gallery)  
[Facebook.com/LoganCenterExhibitions](https://www.facebook.com/LoganCenterExhibitions)  
Instagram @LoganCenterExhibitions

### **Gallery Hours**

Tue-Sat, 9am-9pm  
Sun, 11am-9pm  
Mon, closed