

MACAULAY & CO. FINE ART

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Shawn Hunt Artifake

May 22 – July 17

Macaulay Fine Art is pleased to present solo exhibition 'Artifake' by Vancouver based artist Shawn Hunt. The exhibition explores the conceptual underpinnings and artistic intent of contemporary and historic First Nations artwork and iconography.

Alone in the small gallery an eight-foot hand carved inverted Eagle Bear totem pole, humorously titled Flipping the Bird, walks the line between idea and form. The pole is meticulously knife finished (without the use of sandpaper, as is common practice today). This reference to tradition, and to the surface of the pole juxtaposes the impetus behind the work. Over the past century, the totem as a sacred icon has been subjugated to suit a variety of agendas, particularly the marketing of a Canadian national identity. Hunt defiantly re-purposes the icon once more, and like an inverted national flag, can be seen as an official symbol of distress.

The totem makes several other appearances in the exhibition, each time repurposed in exploration of its various histories. A life size (eight foot) Eagle Bear totem stuffie nestles against a wall, slightly floppy. A seated nude figure made with found model totem poles (studies used in the production of full scale poles), from his brother and father's carving studio lounges on the floor. Playfully exploring the convergence of two cultures and its implications regarding authenticity, it is also a comment, in part, on Hunt's own mixed European-Heilsuk heritage.

Shawn Hunt b. 1975 Vancouver, BC. BFA from University of British Columbia. Lives and works in Vancouver, BC