

# JDJ

## Barnett Cohen

Performance evenings: Wednesday, November 3 & Thursday, November 4, 2021 8pm

Exhibition opening reception: Friday November 5, 2021 3-6pm

Exhibition dates: November 5 - December 18, 2021

JDJ Tribeca  
373 Broadway, B11  
New York, NY 10013

JDJ presents the New York debut of a new performance and a solo exhibition by the Los Angeles-based artist Barnett Cohen.

Working across performance, painting, and poetry, Barnett Cohen chronicles the vast array of language and imagery as it moves through our shared consciousness. Cohen's work deals in anxious forces and neurotic tendencies, the apocalyptic and the quotidian, the individual and the collective.

Cohen will premiere *MOUTHBRAIN*, his first performance piece since recent works at Los Angeles institutions REDCAT and JOAN in 2020 and 2019, respectively. Staged in the round, the two performers engage with the audience directly during this 50 minute long work. Written and directed by Cohen, the text and choreography mirror our post-narrative world, in which a constant flurry of chaotic information attenuates our already-thin attention spans.

The exhibition focuses on Cohen's recent body of paintings comprised entirely out of found and collected stickers on canvas. Each work acts as a constellation of contemporary mark making and chronicles the vast array of language, imagery, and sentiment as it moves with velocity through public space. Each sticker is die-cut, dipped in acrylic liquid polymer, and thoughtfully situated on the canvas with painterly considerations of color, composition, and depth in mind. The kaleidoscopic works are then sealed with several layers of UV polycote, which creates a seamless surface that unites the cacophony of symbols.

Entitled by the dates of their completion, the paintings become archival documents that represent the dynamic ecology of symbols we employ to claim physical territory and assert the identities that we wish to project outward.

Barnett Cohen (b. Cape Town, South Africa) is a queer poet, painter, performance maker, and political activist who lives and works in Los Angeles and New York City. He has exhibited, staged performances, and held readings at REDCAT, JOAN, LAXART, Pieter Space, 356 Mission, Human Resources, The Box (Los Angeles), The International Center For Photography, Beverly's, JDJ (New York), Vox Populi (Philadelphia), City Limits (Oakland), and The Onassis Foundation (Athens, Greece). In 2021, Open Space/SFMOMA will publish a collection of his poems alongside those of artist and collaborator Simone Forti. He received a BA in English from Vassar College, an MFA from The California Institute of The Arts, and has been in-residence at SVA, Skowhegan, MacDowell, and is currently an artist-in-residence at the NARS Foundation, New York. In 2020, he was nominated for the Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist Grant. Cohen is also the founder of the Mutual Aid Immigration Network (MAIN). Established in 2017, MAIN is a trilingual free assistance hotline for people detained in immigration detention centers across the US. MAIN connects people in detention with bond funds and legal services that can accelerate their freedom from incarceration.

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## About JDJ

JDJ was opened by Jayne Drost Johnson in 2018. The gallery represents and exhibits emerging, mid-career and established artists, with an emphasis on the representation of women and people of various identities who are traditionally underserved by the commercial art world and embody a range of artistic practices and sociopolitical perspectives. JDJ has two locations: a newly opened exhibition space in Tribeca, located at 373 Broadway, New York, in the heart of the Tribeca arts district, and at the Ice House, a former industrial building with unique architecture in Garrison, NY. The Ice House was built in the early 1900s and is set amid a beautiful natural landscape rather than a traditional white-cube gallery space.