CONTACT: NATI HYOJIN KIM >>> TEL: 212 331 8888 >>> NATI@MIXEDGREENS.COM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rudy Shepherd
Disaster Fatigue

September 11 – October 11, 2014
Opening Reception: Thursday, September 11, 2014

Mixed Greens is pleased to present Rudy Shepherd's sixth solo exhibition with the gallery. *Disaster Fatigue* consists of a barrage of new paintings, drawings, video, and ceramics that address media saturation and the politics of representation.

For over a decade, Shepherd focused on how people are represented visually. Early on, he studied the conscious framing and manipulation of his own image through several series of self-portraits and videos. This exploration led to over one hundred ink portraits representing public figures—from Thelonius Monk to OJ Simpson—who not only influenced Shepherd's own life and aspirations, but also changed public perception of what it means to be black in America.

Since 2007, Shepherd's focus on representation expanded to address the often problematic way mass media illustrates its stories through sensationalized, but seemingly definitive, visual depictions of criminals and victims. A slow accumulation of drawn and painted portraits quickly escalated into a practice including near-daily drawings of the people Shepherd sees in the news. Through his lens, the news is filtered, sorted, and complicated. Heroes, villains, tragedies, and triumphs hang together in an arresting array. By rendering portraits of individuals who are sensationalized or even demonized by the media, Shepherd invites us to contemplate and pay homage to their complexity as human beings as well as the multifaceted nature of the stories and issues they represent.

In an attempt to counter the tragedy, conflict, and misunderstanding that pervade the work's source material, Shepherd also imagines characters and produces objects with the power to heal personal and social ills. Although he proposes no solution, his "Healer" character (embodied by Shepherd himself) creates moments of collective reflection through videos and live performances that inspire viewers to consider the problems symbolized by Shepherd's drawings and paintings. His sculptures, including ceramic healing devices and shaman-like idols, feel ceremonial and key to the eradication the world's negative energy.

Disaster Fatigue presents the viewer with a journal-like recording of Shepherd's focus for the last several years with glimmers of optimism. A small series of cult leaders hangs quietly in the installation, reminding the viewer of other people who've searched for change, with often tragic results. Shepherd, hyper-aware of the news and misguided attempts for a solution, presents an emotional response to current events and the opportunity for creative dialogue between himself and his viewers.

Shepherd's large-scale public sculpture, Black Rock Negative Energy Absorber, is currently on view at the First Street Green Park (33 East 1st Street, at the corner of Houston Street and 2nd Avenue) in NYC.

Rudy Shepherd received a BFA from Wake Forest University and an MFA from the Art Institute of Chicago. Solo exhibition venues include Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA; Location One, NYC; and Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC. Group show venues include The Studio Museum in Harlem; The Warehouse Gallery, Syracuse, NY; Triple Candie, NYC; the Swiss Institute, NYC; PS1 Contemporary Art Center, Queens, NY; the Contemporary Museum, Baltimore, MD; the Bronx Museum of Art; and the Queens Museum of Art. He received a fellowship from Socrates Sculpture Park and was an artist in residence at the PS1 International Studio Program, the Jacob Lawrence Institute for the Visual Arts, and most recently a Process Space Artist in Residence with the LMCC. He lives in NYC and State College, PA, where he is an Assistant Professor at Penn State University. His work is on view in the acclaimed exhibition *When the Stars Begin to Fall* travelling from The Studio Museum in Harlem to the Museum of Art, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, and the ICA in Boston, MA.

>>>