Marianne Boesky Gallery to Open Its First Solo Exhibition in New York
Of Work by The Haas Brothers,
Featuring All New Bead and Stone Works

On View September 12 – October 26, 2019
Opening Reception September 12, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

On September 12, Marianne Boesky Gallery will open its first solo exhibition of work by The Haas Brothers in New York City. The show, which is titled Madonna, will feature a new body of beaded sculptures, created at a wide range of scales, from the intimate to the monumental, as well as two large-scale sculptures made from Portuguese Pele de Tigré marble. The exhibition captures The Haas Brothers’ increasing interest in exploring nature and spirituality as part of their deep commitment to material experimentation and traditional craft techniques, while also encapsulating their vision of collaborative artmaking. Madonna will be on view at the gallery’s 509 W. 24th Street location through October 26, 2019. Marianne Boesky Gallery will also dedicate its Frieze London presentation in October to The Haas Brothers’ ceramic Accretions, providing audiences with further access to the artists’ dynamic practice.

Since founding The Haas Brothers in 2010, brothers Nikolai (Niki) and Simon have been guided by a vision of creative experimentation, spurning perceived artistic boundaries and embracing instead the limitless potential of imagination and innovation. Their general curiosity and appetite for risk-taking has led to the creation of an incredibly diverse body of work, from functional design to singular artworks and to the extraordinary world of undefinable objects that live in the liminal space between. Produced in materials that range from stone and porcelain to brass and bronze to self-invented resins and polyurethanes, The Haas Brothers’ works are acclaimed for their distinct evocations of both abstract and figurative visual vocabularies as well as for the whimsical and generous spirit that pervades them.

For Madonna, The Haas Brothers will create a colorful, tropical environment, filled with sculptures and objects that resemble rare plant life and creatures—all produced through intricate beading techniques. As is now a signature of the Brothers’ presentations, the exhibition transports viewers into an otherworldly realm, where fantastical animals and odd hybrids reside. Underlying this particular landscape is The Haas Brothers’ vision for a future, entirely female society. This vision is anchored in the exhibition by a 10-foot-tall figure—produced through a combination of the Brothers’ bead and marble work—that embodies aspects of the Madonna, Amazonian warrior, and mother nature. The emphasis on women also extends beyond the conceptual underpinnings of the show to the production of the work itself.

The Haas Brothers were first introduced to beading in 2015, when they met a group of women artisans selling beadworks in a craft market in Cape Town, South Africa. The Brothers’ were enamored with both the complexity of the technique and the incredible artistry in the women’s work. Seizing the serendipity of the moment, the Brothers’ established a collaboration with the artisans, which led to the development of the Afreaks series, a group of beaded creatures that were shown at the Cooper Hewitt’s Design Triennial in 2016. Since then, ‘The Haas Brothers’ collaboration with the collective of women, who warmly go by The Haas Sisters, has grown and matured.
For the upcoming presentation at Marianne Boesky Gallery, the collective will support the production of the featured beaded objects, guided by The Haas Brothers’ preparatory drawings and using a selection of Murano glass beads produced in Venice between 1880 and 1980, which The Haas Brothers purchased after the factory became defunct. In addition, Simon Haas has developed a complex system that captures the expansive creative opportunities that beading allows and that provides a guide to learning the craft. This system has been articulated in The Haas Brothers’ Bead Book, which has allowed Simon and Niki to teach the techniques to people local to the area of Lost Hills in Central California, establishing a workshop that offers work and fair pay in an area that lacks employment options. A portion of the profits gained from the sale of The Haas Brothers’ works are also given back to the communities that have helped produce them—this in addition to payment for the manufacturing itself.

“Part of the vision for our practice, and what we see as essential to the creation of art, is the establishment of communities. We are constantly asking how we can engage with others to achieve something new; something beautiful; something that excites or brings joy—that is really the importance and value of art and artmaking,” said The Haas Brothers. “At the same time, we recognize the platform and voice that we have been given, and think it is critical that we use both to uplift and support others, especially women who have traditionally not been recognized for their craftwork and skills. We feel so lucky to have developed this relationship with The Haas Sisters, and to have the opportunity to shed light on their dedication and tremendous work, while also paying a fair and right wage for their contributions.”

The beadwork in the exhibition will be augmented by several sculptures made from Portuguese Pele de Tigre marble. The Brothers first came to stone carving in their youth, learning from their father, artist Berthold Haas, and recently returned to the material, showing several large pieces at Marianne Boesky Gallery’s Aspen location in June 2018. The solid, smooth, and monumental nature of the stone works provides a powerful counterpoint to the more delicate and finely detailed beadworks and highlights the range of The Haas Brother’s practice. Here too, community proves an important element, as The Haas Brothers’ engagement has helped spur the development of stone-carving as an economic engine at the quarry that they use. The anchor figure within the upcoming exhibition combines the efforts and visions of the various communities with which the Brothers are involved—each lending to an aspect of its creation and making it a true embodiment of their collaborative vision.

The Haas Brothers, twins Nikolai and Simon (b. 1984), founded their joint practice in Los Angeles in 2010 when architects Johnson Marklee offered them a chance to collaborate on a friend’s project. The years since have seen them evolve from fabricators to acclaimed innovators, working across design, art, fashion, film, and music. The Haas Brothers’ work has been presented in a wide range of museum and gallery presentations, including at the ArtScience Museum (Singapore), Mori Arts Center Gallery (Tokyo), and in Beauty–Cooper Hewitt Design Triennial at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum (New York). In fall 2018, they were recognized with their first solo museum presentation at the Bass Museum of Art in Miami, curated by Silvia Cubina. Their work is held in collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Rhode Island School of Design.
Museum, among others. In 2019, they were the recipients of the Arison Award, given by the YoungArts Foundation. They live and work in Los Angeles.

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For more information about The Haas Brothers, please contact Gallery Director Kelly Woods at kelly@boeskygallery.com or 212.680.9889. For press inquiries, please contact Alina Sumajin, PAVE Communications and Consulting, at alina@paveconsult.com or 646.369.2050.