

Rob Pruitt's *The Obama Paintings* and *The Lincoln Monument* will be presented to the public for the first time beginning May 15, 2015. Both works serve as monuments in themselves, as well as examinations of presidential monuments in general. The exhibition will spotlight how images of past presidents are disseminated and function in our society.

Rob Pruitt began *The Obama Paintings* as a means of tracking President Barack Obama's presidency. Since Obama's inauguration on January 20, 2009, Pruitt has created a two foot by two foot painting of the President every single day, with particular imagery drawn from the news of that day. Upon completion, *The Obama Paintings* will comprise 2,922 paintings, incorporating such seminal events as his first State of the Union address to seemingly mundane activities. Each canvas is given equal importance, regardless of the traditional metrics of newsworthiness of the moment it depicts.

The process for creating each work in *The Obama Paintings* is the same: a canvas is covered in a spectrum of red to blue; once an image is selected, often for its aesthetic qualities and composition, Pruitt paints it in white expressionist brushstrokes onto the background. This is further emphasized by the installation of the unframed works in a non-chronological, seamless grid. A work-in-progress, *The Obama Paintings* takes on new meanings as each canvas is added to the larger work.

*The Lincoln Monument* uses the most ubiquitous form of presidential iconography - the copper penny - as raw material. The work is made up of 200,000 pennies filling three stacked copper painted truck tires. Odes to public fountains, Pruitt's ongoing 'People Feeder' sculptures are often filled with coins, candy or other offerings, the first iterations having been shown at his 2010 exhibition, *Pattern and Degradation* at Gavin Brown's Enterprise.

*The Obama Paintings* and *The Lincoln Monument* will be presented to the public for the first time in an exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD), beginning May 15, 2015. The presentation will include a site-specific installation of the work filling MOCAD's galleries. Curated by Elysia Borowy-Reeder, executive director at MOCAD, the exhibition will offer audiences the opportunity to experience the work- and presidency-in-progress. Related public programs will be offered, including a talk from the artist. A solo exhibition of Pruitt will open the same week at The Brant Foundation Art Study Center, in Connecticut.

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