

Barbarian Days

Fergus McCaffrey St. Barth
By Appointment Only

“In a huge, empty room, a fat dirty, greasy man was slapping white paint on a blank canvas with a kitchen knife. From time to time he would press his face against the window and look out at the storm. The sea came so close that it seemed to batter the house and completely envelope it in its foam and roar. The salty water beat against the windowpanes like hail, and ran down the walls. On his mantelpiece was a bottle of cider next to a half-filled glass. Now and then, Courbet would take a few swigs, and then return to his work. This work became *The Wave*, and caused quite a sensation around the world.”

—Guy de Maupassant recounts a visit he made to Courbet during his stay at Etretat, France, September 12, 1886 ¹

We are pleased to present *Barbarian Days* opening March 11th at the gallery’s St. Barth location, exhibiting works by: Rachelle Dang, Koji Enokura, Herbie Fletcher, Francesca Gabbiani, Katharina Grosse, Julio Le Parc, Robert Levine, Robert Longo, Ari Marcopoulos, Catherine Opie, Joni Sternbach, and Lawrence Weiner.



Taking as our inspiration the autobiography *Barbarian Days: A Surfing Life*, the 2016 Pulitzer Prize-winning memoir of *New Yorker* writer, William Finnegan, this unruly exhibition celebrates historic and contemporary artists who consider the ocean as a vehicle for an enriching and daunting personal psychosomatic investigation into creative catharsis. Presented at Fergus McCaffrey St. Barth, the gallery’s intimate venue on the wild side of the island at Grand Fond, the exhibition is acoustically augmented by the nearby rush of crashing waves and reverberating subterranean coral ricochets.



The sea is endless, a source of the known and unknown. The artists in this exhibition draw directly from the ocean—in some cases physically immersing their bodies; in others, their minds; for many, often both. Francesca Gabbiani, Katharina Grosse and Herbie Fletcher are avid surfers; Rachelle Dang, Joni Sternbach, and Catherine Opie, keen observers; for Lawrence Weiner and Robert Levine the wave is an inspiration for intellectual reflection; for Ari Marcopoulos, Koji Enokura and Robert Longo, wry awe. Common to all, is its offering of expansive possibilities to harness force through image, language, and gesture. These are *Barbarian Days* indeed.

LANCER
CAST ADRIFT
À LA SURFACE
UPON THE SURFACE
DE L'EAU
OF THE WATER

About Fergus McCaffrey

Founded in 2006, Fergus McCaffrey represents an increasingly global group of post-war and contemporary artists from the United States, Europe, and Japan. For over a decade, the gallery has developed a multifaceted program, representing over 24 artists and estates worldwide. Internationally recognized for its promotion of postwar Japanese and seminal western artists, Fergus McCaffrey has locations in New York, Tokyo, and St. Barth. In March 2020, the gallery launched its fully virtual, fourth location, FM Virtual, accessible 24 hours a day on fergusmccaffrey.com.

To schedule a viewing, please contact:

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Images:

1. Robert Longo, *Study for Heaven's Hole*, 2004. Ink and charcoal on vellum, 15 3/4 x 18 3/8 inches (40 x 46.7 cm) © Robert Longo; courtesy Metro Pictures, New York
2. Koji Enokura, *P.W. No. 40, Symptom-Sea, Body*, 1972. Unique black and white photographic print, 7 1/2 x 11 1/4 inches (19.2 x 28.7 cm) © Estate of Koji Enokura
3. Lawrence Weiner, *CAST ADRIFT UPON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER*, 2021. LANGUAGE + THE MATERIALS REFERRED TO, Dimensions variable © Lawrence Weiner; courtesy Galerie Hubert Winter, Vienna

¹ "The Wave, 1870 by Gustave Courbet." The Wave, 1870. <https://www.gustave-courbet.com/the-wave.jsp>.