
ART

Gauri Gill

Oct. 7-Nov. 13

Cohan
52 Walker St.
Downtown

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[Website](#)



The worlds of dreams and reality merge in this Indian photographer's enthralling vignettes: a lizard drives a van, a woman has a camera for a head, a horse has a job in an office. To make the images of "Acts of Appearance," an ongoing series that Gill began in 2015 and now auspiciously inaugurates the James Cohan gallery's second Tribeca location, the Delhi-based artist collaborated with mask-makers from the Kokna and Warli tribes in the rural state of Maharashtra, who usually sculpt and paint the heads of gods and goddesses for performances of Hindu epics and tribal myths as part of the city of Jawhar's annual Bohada festival. Working with Gill, the craftspeople traded divine and demonic subjects for animals and consumer goods, as well as stylized human likenesses. In the photos, these bright, oversized papier-mâché heads are worn by village inhabitants, creating surreal ruptures in otherwise naturalistic scenes. The immovable faces are curiously expressive, revealing some hidden aspect of the wearers as they bridge everyday life and allegorical realms in Gill's rich, remarkable pictures.

—*Johanna Fateman*

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