

# Richard McDonough



## Recommended by Phong H. Bui

Richard McDonough's enterprise as an artist mediating between painting and sculpture rests upon the notion of revelry—memory that persists through association of phenomenological experience. His invention of imagery repudiates any preconception of scale. In fact, it's the poetry of his spatial conception that creates the images. This is precisely McDonough's own justified relationship, how to gravitate back and forth between representation and abstraction. The sensuality of touch gives rise to his own sensual embrace of whatever material he chooses to work with. Again, McDonough's geography of imagination is one that belongs to both past and present moments in his perpetual search for the fluctuating synthesis of painterly form with sculptural means, and vice versa.

*Phong H. Bui, Fall 2020*

## Bio

Richard McDonough (b. 1995 in Ithaca, NY) is an artist living in Brooklyn and working in Queens, NY. McDonough attended the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in Baltimore, MD, from 2013 to 2017 and received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting. In 2015, he attended the Burren College of Art (BCA) in Ballyvaughan, County Clare, Ireland for a semester study abroad, and in 2014, joined the New York City Summer Studio Residency Program for the Summer Intensive Program: Painting, Drawing, Digital Photography. McDonough has received numerous grants, awards, and scholarships including the Fulbright Finalist (Alternate) in 2017, the Painting Department Scholarship from 2015-2017, the MICA Trustee Award and MICA Dean's Grant from 2013-2017, the Fanny B. Thalheimer Scholarship from 2013-2017, and the Winnie Gordon Scholarship in 2014. Concurrently, his work is being shown in a group show at the Baltimore Museum of Art.

## Artist Statement

I was never afraid of heights growing up. I'd walk around the rim of Ludlowville Falls, softly footing my way across the stream before it spilled over the edge and peer over the wide mouth of the waterfall. I watched the pool of water below swirl inside a dam of fallen trees until it leaked out and slipped past the smooth stones on its way down Salmon Creek. In the froth and foam were small watersnakes, a fleet of tadpoles, nibbling minnows, occasionally a swimmer, lines of logs cutting across each other, and hazy boulders veiled underneath the surface. Beneath the shelf that held the falls was a recessed cavern. I could reach the hollow area by creeping around a narrow edge or swimming across the pool. This interior space was shaped like a grotto and felt like the inside of an upright tomb. A sheet of water enshrouded the chamber.

When I approach image making I tend to see things from a distance, as if recalling a dream or rolling my eyes back into my head to examine a memory. My viewfinder wades through the impression, runs a finger along the wall to gather textures, mushes and compresses details, miniaturizes, and zooms in further. I'm drawn to images and spaces that hold or cradle—a bed, coffin, torso, floor, interior room, tomb, house, enclosure. I see these coves as sites for transformation: resting, sleeping, dying, mourning, love-making, gathering. Often there is a cooperation or group-process occurring: interlocutors take part in burials, choir singing, processions, and ceremonial rituals. We join them in the midst of their proceedings and find ground under our feet.

My process of making involves juggling different methods. An image may germinate as a drawing or photograph, later be constructed as a sculpture, and eventually inform the setting of a painting. However, there is not a hierarchy stratifying the practices and no set end point for an image. My practice allows for piles of images to accumulate, so that they may be reshuffled and sifted through as time progresses.

## Works in the Exhibition



*Richard McDonough 2020, Tile Floor (Left) Oil on Plaster Tablet 10.25" x 15"; 2020, Pink Moon Singers (Center), Oil on Plaster Tablet 10.25" x 7.5"; and 2020 He Was Glowing (Right) Oil on Plaster Tablet 10.25" x 7.5"*



*Richard McDonough 2019. Choir House (left), acrylic, gouache, oil, wood, lath, glass tile, paper pulp, air-dry clay, primer, 108" x 97" x 9.75"; Red Moon (2020, right), Oil on Plaster Tablet 10.25" x 7.5"*



*Richard McDonough 2019. Choir House, from other side (left); As if You Were the Sun (2020, right), Oil on Plaster Tablet 10.25" x 7.5"*