

Bockley Gallery

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Bockley Gallery to present George Morrison, Jim Denomie and Dyani White Hawk
at The Armory Show, New York's Art Fair**



Bockley Gallery is pleased to announce its third year participating in [The Armory Show](#), an established art fair that brings leading international contemporary and modern art galleries to New York City annually, this year taking place at Javits Center from September 6-8, 2024, with a VIP preview on September 5. Selected for two distinct fair sections – [Galleries](#) (Booth 317) and [Platform](#) – Bockley Gallery brings together three celebrated artists: George Morrison (Grand Portage Ojibwe, 1919-2000), Jim Denomie (Lac Courte Oreille Ojibwe, 1955-2022), and Dyani White Hawk (Sičáŋǵu Lakota, b. 1976). Overall, the two ambitious presentations speak to place, intergenerational relations and cross-cultural intersectionality in Native/American modern and contemporary art and its histories. Specifically, the [Galleries](#) booth celebrates the artists' respective practices, while its [Platform](#) presentation amplifies the spirit of homage by creating dialogue between the artists through a shared sculptural form.

***Galleries* (Booth 317)**

Bockley Gallery's booth presentation focuses on the respective practices of George Morrison, Jim Denomie, and Dyani White Hawk, with works spanning forty years, dating from 1984-2024. George Morrison is celebrated for artworks that fuse phenomenology inspired by his homelands on the north shore of Lake Superior and the fervent creativity of the early period of abstract expressionism to which he belonged. In a selection of intimate enigmatic paintings and bold colored pencil and ink works on paper, the abstracted landscape is oriented by his signature and spirited horizon line. Jim Denomie created vividly hued works based on the dreamworld, the erotic and the spiritual, as well as incisive narrative-based history paintings on Native lived experiences in relation to tribal, state, national, and global politics. The works selected for Armory center Denomie's gestural, brushy, impasto surfaces in portraits both wry and mysterious, as well as landscapes of the spirit world including from his iconic series *Four Days Four Nights*. Dyani White Hawk's (Sičáŋǵu Lakota, b. 1976) practice across media acknowledges the complexity of intersectionality as it foregrounds and honors aesthetic and relational histories between Lakota art forms and what is called modern art. Two large-scale paintings, *Anpétu Wašté (Good Day)* and *Hanhépi Wašté (Good Night)* (both 2024), speak simultaneously to canonical geometric abstraction and Lakota visuality through *kapemni*, the triangular hourglass shape, a symbol for teaching the Lakota world views of earth-sky mirroring.

Platform

Platform is Armory's curated section dedicated to large-scale installations and site-specific works. This year's curator, Eugenie Tsai, selected Bockley Gallery's proposal to feature a trio of towering sculptures by George Morrison, Jim Denomie, and Dyani White Hawk. Honoring Morrison as a shared art historical ancestor and mentor, Denomie and White Hawk have been deeply influenced by his visual and conceptual languages, and how he navigated modernism as a Native artist in connection to their shared home of Minnesota and the wider Great Lakes region. This celebratory, multigenerational presentation of cascading homage also speaks to Tsai's conceptual framework, "the interplay of memory, material and spirit."

George Morrison's *Totemic Column* (1995-2024), measuring fourteen feet in height, is a stunning example of the wooden, rectangular prisms he created in editions throughout the second half of his career, beginning in 1977. Varying in size, from mere inches to over forty feet in height, each sculpture was treated as a three-dimensional collage. The word "totem" comes from the Ojibwe *doodem*, meaning clan; its English use is commonly associated with tall wooden carvings of relational, narrative, and spiritual significance. While Morrison's totemic forms speak materially with lands and waters, he expressed he was "not telling a story through animal and human images but making an abstract version of structural and organic vertical form."¹ His homage was always and equally of artistic kinship to the cubist and surrealist-informed abstractionists who inspired his unique aesthetic.

Jim Denomie's *Untitled (Totem Painting)* (2016), measuring twelve feet in height, was made in honor of Morrison. Its four sides are stacked with spirited animal-human images known to totemic carving, though rendered in his signature painterly expressionism and core palette of violet, indigo, turquoise, lime green, fuchsia, and mustard yellow. Each tower of figures is topped by the rabbit figure who Denomie identified with as a guardian, a trickster, as well as his alter ego.

Dyani White Hawk's *Visiting* (2024), measuring ten feet in height, expresses homage not only to Morrison's legacy but equally to her late colleague and longtime friend Denomie for his enduring generosity. Through the crazy quilt methodology, in which disparate pieces (in this case, hand-loomed glass bugle bead strips created by her studio community that includes relatives and friends) are brought together to form a cohesive whole, *Visiting* (2024) extends White Hawk's inheritance and innovation of Lakota geometric abstraction and materiality. While clad in her signature beading on metallic underpainting, the nature of *Visiting*'s graphic asymmetry is a new and bold addition to her values of balance and beauty as medicine.

As the trio of dynamic totemic forms stand tall in their respective ways, they also visit with each other - performing homage, multigenerational aesthetics, and a shared sense of place. Welcoming both close looking and circumambulation, in White Hawk's words, the sculptures are "ways to be wholly present while journeying through."

About the Artists and Bockley Gallery

George Morrison (Grand Portage Ojibwe) was born in 1919, Chippewa City at the north shore of Lake Superior, Minnesota, and passed away in 2000 on Grand Portage Reservation. He studied at the Minneapolis School of Art (now Minneapolis College of Art and Design) (1938-1943), the Art Students League, New York (1943–1946), and various universities across France during his Fulbright Scholarship year (1952-1953). An educator at numerous East Coast and Midwest institutions, he returned to Minnesota in 1970 where he became a member of the American Indian Movement and was appointed to a dual position at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, as founding faculty in the first American Indian Studies program in the United States and as faculty in the Department of Art. Morrison retired in 1983 and lived and worked at Red Rock, his studio on the Grand Portage Reservation, until his passing. Morrison had over fifty solo exhibitions during his lifetime, from his first at Grand Central Moderns Gallery, NY (1948) to *George Morrison: Drawings*, Walker Art Center (1973) and *Standing in the Northern Lights: George Morrison, A Retrospective*, Minnesota Museum of American Art, St. Paul (1990; traveled nationally). Posthumous exhibitions include *Before and After the Horizon: Anishinaabe Artists of the Great Lakes*, National Museum of the American Indian (2013), and *Space Makers: Indigenous Expression and a New American Art*, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art (2024). Morrison's work is found in prominent museum collections, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Minneapolis Institute of Art, National Gallery of Art, and Whitney Museum of American Art, among many others. In 2024, the George Morrison Catalogue Raisonné Project was established by the George Morrison Estate and Bockley Gallery, Minneapolis. www.georgemorrison.com

Jim Denomie (Lac Courte Oreille Ojibwe) was born in 1955, Hayward, Wisconsin, and passed away in 2022 in Shafer, Minnesota. In 2023, The Minneapolis Institute of Art presented his posthumous survey and catalog, *The Lyrical Artwork of Jim Denomie*. Other recent solo exhibitions include *Challenging the Narrative*, Michigan's Muskegon Museum of Art (2020–2021) and *Standing Rock Paintings*, Bockley Gallery (2019). Group exhibitions include *And if I devoted my life to one of its feathers?*, Kunsthalle Wien in Vienna (2021), *The Expressionist Figure: 100 Years of Modern and Contemporary Drawing*, Walker Art Center (2019–2020), and *Imagined Communities* at 21st Contemporary Art Biennial Sesc_Videobrasil in São Paulo (2019). Honored with a multitude of grants and awards, Denomie received the McKnight Foundation's Distinguished Artist Award (2019), a McKnight Artist Fellowship, and the Artist Initiative Grant through the Minnesota State Arts Board (2018), as well as a Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant (2015). His work is in numerous collections, including those at the Denver Art Museum, Philbrook Museum of Art, and the Walker Art Center. The Jim Denomie Memorial Scholarship was established in 2022 as an annual prize given to a Native artist exemplifying its namesake's values of commitment to excellence, generosity of spirit, and engagement with community.

Dyani White Hawk (Sičáŋǵu Lakota) was born in 1976 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and is based between Shakopee and Minneapolis, Minnesota. She holds an MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2011) and BFA from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico (2008). Featured in the 2022 Whitney Biennial followed by a permanent commission at the Whitney Museum of American Art, White Hawk's art has been the subject of numerous institutional solo shows, including at the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver (2022), the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art (2022), and the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art (2021). In 2025, the artist will be the subject of a survey exhibition, *Dyani White Hawk: Love Language*, co-organized by the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis and Remai Modern, Saskatoon. Her work is widely collected, including by Aktá Lakota Museum, Brooklyn Museum, Denver Art Museum, Guggenheim Museum,

Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, and the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. White Hawk is the recipient of generous recognitions and awards, most recently, the Guggenheim Fellowship and Creative Capital Grant (both 2024) and MacArthur Foundation Fellowship (2023).

Bockley Gallery is a contemporary art venue and curatorial practice based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Since its founding in 1984, the gallery has worked with artists living and working in Minnesota and the Great Lakes region, which led to its focus with Indigenous artists across Turtle Island/North America. While the gallery offers an intimate experience through a calendar of on-site programming, its broad collaborations expand the dialogue around what it celebrates as the most relevant ideas in art today. Gallery artists' recent highlighted institutional solo exhibitions across Turtle Island include at Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; ICA, Miami; Walker Art Center, MN; Minneapolis Institute of Art, MN; Hessel Museum of Art, NY; Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, CO; Remai Modern, Saskatoon; and more; while recent group presentations include Sydney Biennale; SITE Santa Fe; Toronto Biennale of Art; Whitney Biennale; and Prospect 5 Triennial. Gallery artists are regularly honored through significant recognition including the Guggenheim Fellowship, Creative Capital Award, MacArthur Fellowship, Baloise Art Prize, Aperture Next Step Award, and many more. The gallery regularly places works in leading private and public collections such as the Walker Art Center, Whitney Museum of American Art, Metropolitan Museum of American Art, Forge Project Collection, National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, and the Singapore Art Museum. Celebrating 40 years in 2024, Bockley Gallery recently launched a dynamic new website including an online publishing platform to center essays and voices of artists in conversation.

For more information, contact:

Emily Marsolek, Gallery Manager | information@bockleygallery.com | +1-612-377-4669

Images, from left to right:

George Morrison, *Untitled*, 1995. Color pencil and ink on paper. Courtesy the George Morrison Estate and Bockley Gallery, Minneapolis.

Jim Denomie, *Adam and Eve*, 2013. Oil on canvas. Courtesy the Jim Denomie Estate and Bockley Gallery, Minneapolis.