

**For Immediate Release**

**Jonathan Trayte: *Fruiting Habits***

June 21 – July 27, 2018

Opening reception: Thursday, June 21: 6-8pm



Jonathan Trayte, *Fruiting Habits* (2018)

**New York, NY** – Friedman Benda will present the gallery's first collaboration with London-based artist **Jonathan Trayte**, which marks Trayte's first solo exhibition in the US.

For this project Trayte assembles a surreal and psychologically provocative landscape, with living, sleeping and eating quarters. This fantasy world is instantly appealing, but also intentionally strange, and laced with mordant wit. The pieces form a quirky and characterful family of misfits. "The work that I tend to make comes together all at once, like a cast of characters," says Trayte. "There's always some weird older brother, the 'black sheep,' that doesn't quite fit."

Trayte comes from a background in fine art sculpture, and also has had broad experience in other fields – including as a chef and foundry metal worker. In this show, he brings his skills and interests to designing functional objects. This is, he recognizes, a "fresh take," almost an outsider's view, of domesticity. Familiar objects like lamps or a bedroom and dining set morph into strange compositions where natural forms and glossy synthetic skins of paint converge. The range of materials that he incorporates into this repertoire is extremely wide – painted bronze, leather, wood, marble and neon – as is the scope of his imagery. Most important are consumables like bulbous melons and gourds, confections, and deli meats, all of which he renders with great affection and a tongue-in-cheek sense of humor. The exuberance and sheer sculptural invention of the work amount to a 21<sup>st</sup> century return of the Baroque.

Thanks to his background in the catering industry, Trayte has a visceral feel for the texture of produce, which he applies in unexpected ways to the objects and their *mise en scène*. He also

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draws from the visual cues of packaging: candy wrappers and snack boxes that he collects from all over the world. Trayte is struck by the fact that food, one of humanity's few true universals, is visualized so differently in various cultures. Beneath the bright and playful veneers of packaging, Trayte finds real psychological depth. He draws from that deep well a commentary on personal desire, cultural habits, and rampant consumerism.

#### **About Jonathan Trayte**

Jonathan Trayte was born in 1980 in Huddersfield, UK. Trayte received a BFA from University of the Creative Arts Canterbury in 2004 and a postgraduate degree in Fine Art from Royal Academy Schools in 2010. Trayte's work has been included in numerous international exhibitions. His recent solo exhibitions include *SCHUSSBOOMER*, Castor Projects, London (2017-18); *Polyculture*, The Tetley, Leeds, UK (2016); *Experiments in Consuming*, The Kings School, Canterbury, UK (2016); *Pazar*, Marcelle Joseph Projects and Istanbul Art Project, Istanbul, Turkey (2014). In 2016, he was awarded the Fashion Arts Foundation Award by the British Fashion Council and was the recipient of Time Out Istanbul Residency in Turkey in 2014. Recently, Trayte was selected to participate in Whitechapel Gallery's London Open exhibition, on view from June 6 to September 2, 2018. Trayte currently lives and works in London.

#### **About Friedman Benda**

Friedman Benda is dedicated to presenting established and emerging designers who create historically significant work and are at the forefront of their practice. Founded in 2007, the gallery's exhibitions and publications have played a vital role in the development of the contemporary design market and education, and take a comprehensive approach to work that intersects the fields of design, craft and art. Friedman Benda represents an international roster of designers spanning six continents and multiple generations.

For further information please visit [www.friedmanbenda.com](http://www.friedmanbenda.com)

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