

— THE WORLD THAT CHANGED THE IMAGE —

fried contemporary is proud to present an exhibition by wayne barker in the collectors room

# WAYNE BARKER | THE WORLD THAT CHANGED THE IMAGE

06 April - 13 May 2017

"The world, with daily increase, produces images at a greater rate than ever before. We produce constantly with our camera phones. We reproduce images of daily life. We produce millions of images. Millions of selfies. Millions of landscapes. Millions of photos that might never get seen again, stored in the digital cloud that exists in the ether. We constantly create and reinterpret images integral to our historical frame of reference. We have changed the way we consume images. We have changed the way we make images. We are the world that changed the image.

Barker, throughout his career, has worked with appropriated and borrowed images as a critique of the world around him. The interaction between life and the image, human identity and the image are vital to his practice. In this exhibition he experiments for the first time with silkscreen, a medium that lends itself well to the reproduction of images. Within the medium lie implicit references

to artists like Warhol, who utilized this system of image reproduction, and the critical consideration of the image that is foregrounded through this method of production.

Barker explores the power of the image, the way in which the world has produced images and how they are reproduced. He has consistently worked with images borrowed from other sources, exploring the power of the image. He works with the meaning an artist creates when appropriating well-known images, elucidating the layers of meaning, cultural depth and power. He subverts, questions and pulls at the edges of meaning, creating tension and challenging the viewer to reinterpret these canonical images in a contemporary framework.

Barker started working in silkscreen during a trip to New York City in 2015. Working with master printers he was inspired to continue work with the

medium back in Joburg. He set up his own printing press in his studio near Ellis Park, learning how to print, how to experiment and how to manipulate the medium to produce his layered images. It has been a challenge to Barker, learning how to work with this new medium. This challenge and new obsession, has allowed Barker to expand his practice and his aesthetic.

Thematically Barker refers to Goya as a departure point, looking from Goya toward the contemporary, exploring images of what we consider to be historical moments of gravity. As Goya did, Barker explores the tensions and struggles of a world that continues to heave around us today. He also uses the grotesque, the elaborate, the exaggerated, the provocative, as Goya did. He balances this carefully in a constellation of images that refer to his cognizant struggle with the global increase of conservatism and religious extremism, of a world where many

countries are constantly at war with one another and their own inhabitants. We live our own narratives, and the narratives of others through the images that we create and consume.

These images predict and follow one another equally, harbingers of what is to come; simultaneous reminders of what has happened. It is a mode of representation that asserts the way history repeats itself. This repetition is also inherent to the medium of print and reproduction, the way in which we reproduce images, thought, ourselves, our actions - the cyclical nature of life.

An image he has used prominently in this body of work is that of the first image of the earth from space broadcast on television, and that which he says is the "Image that changed the world, of the world that changed the image." Television changed global access to images in a whole new way that film, or print, previously did not allow for. The method of silkscreen was a precursor to digital printing, another mode of reproduction that would completely change the way

we consume and create the image. Barker relates medium to subject matter closely in this new body of work, and all its historical implications. He explores the World That Changed The Image."

## WAYNE BARKER

Wayne Barker's artistic career spans almost two decades, marked by a bitter-sweet mix of politics, poetry, and a passion for subversion. Tracking that career from apartheid South Africa's most violent years to a new democratic dispensation, the artist's monograph explores the contradictory impulses of "African identity", and Barker's exploration of a continent's commodification.

At times part Pop Art, at others a layered deployment of traditional genres and media, Barker's work stands as much as an indictment of colonialism as of misplaced political correctness. From the first seduction to the twist in the gut, it is as beautiful as it is provoking.

Wayne was born in Pretoria, South Africa, in 1963. In 1981 he took his Diploma in Fine Art, at Technikon Pretoria and later completed a BA (Fine Art) at Michaelis, University of Cape Town in 1984. He completed his education with a Postgraduate Degree (Fine Art) at the Ecole des Beux Art, Luminy, in Marseille in 1998.

Barker has been involved in numerous projects, symposiums and workshops, involving academics, artists as well as children and communities. He founded the Famous International Gallery, South Africa, 1989-1995.

WAYNE BARKER



*THE SICK AND THE HEALTHY*, 2016, Ed 5/6, Screen print on arches cold-press, 76,3 x 57,4 cm, Framed

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*THE RESULTS*, 2016, Ed 4/10 Screen print on arches cold-press, 50 x 66 cm, Framed

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*NOTHING THE EVENT WILL TELL*, 2016, Ed 9/10, Screen print on arches cold-press, 66 x 50 cm, Framed

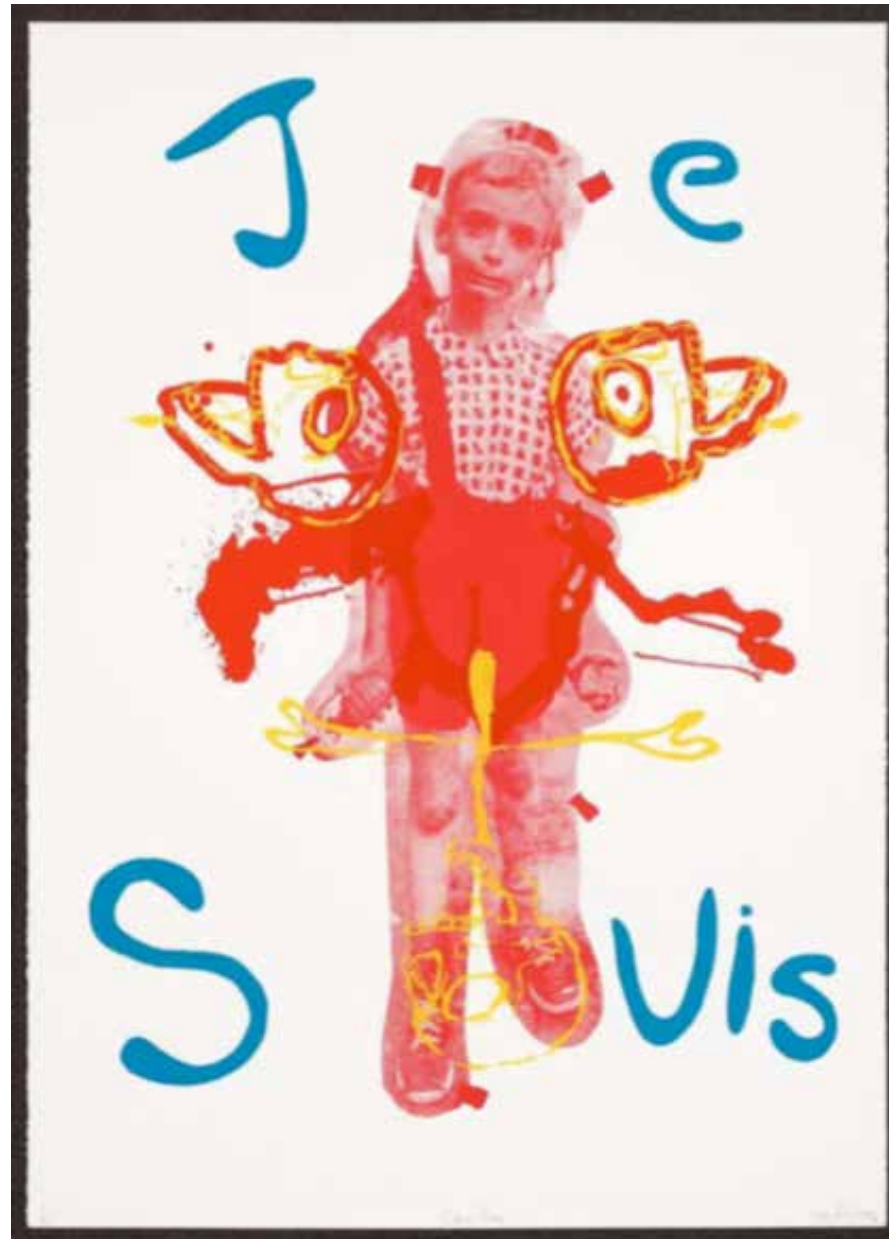
WAYNE BARKER



*THIS IS TRUTH*, 2016, AP/6, Screen print on arches cold-press 50 x 66 cm, Framed



WAYNE BARKER



*CROSS FIRE II*, 2016, Ed 1/2, Screen print on Fabriano, 100 x 71 cm, Framed

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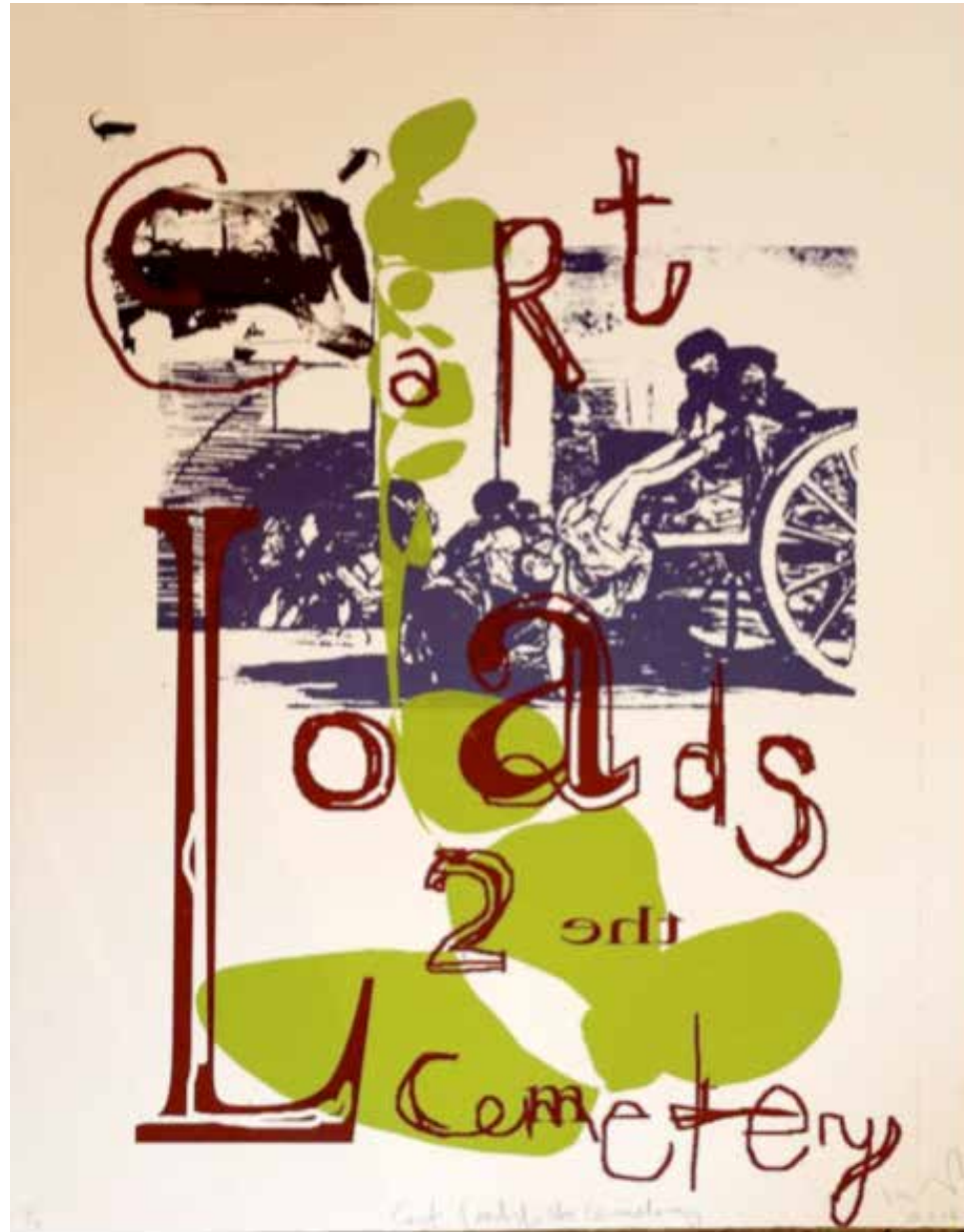
*THE BED OF DEATH*, 2016, Ed 1/10, Screen print on arches cold-press, 66 x 50 cm, Framed

WAYNE BARKER



*DISASTERS OF WAR*, 2016, Ed 1/6, Screen print on arches cold-press, 50 x 66 cm, Framed

WAYNE BARKER



*CART LOADS TWO THE CEMETERY*, 2016, Ed 1/6 Screen print on arches cold-press, 76 x 57 cm, Framed.

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