

## DIANE ROSENSTEIN

### For Immediate Release:

#### DIANE ROSENSTEIN

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#### Ray Anthony Barrett: Word Is Bond

October 18 – November 29, 2014

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Opening: Saturday October 18th, 2014, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

DIANE ROSENSTEIN is pleased to announce *Ray Anthony Barrett: Word Is Bond*, a solo exhibition of drawings by the Los Angeles-based artist. *Ray Anthony Barrett: Word Is Bond* opens in the gallery's Project Room on Saturday, October 18th, with a reception for the artist from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm. This is Barrett's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles.

Ray Anthony Barrett, who was born in Kansas City, Missouri, will present twelve new ink on paper drawings. Mr. Barrett's intricate tableaus depict anthropomorphically masked figures engaged in allegorical narratives. In the satirical tradition of Lewis Carroll and the visual language of 19<sup>th</sup> Century political cartoons, these compositions include poetic texts that uses hip-hop vernacular to articulate an evolving mythology.

Mr. Barrett acknowledges contemporary influences such as R. Crumb and David Hammons; but emphasizes the visual legacy of Hieronymus Bosch, Pieter Brueghel, and James Ensor. On the other hand, the rhythm, style, and delivery (especially the political content) of 1990s hip-hop groups Public Enemy and The Wu Tang Clan reveal themselves in the text.

In his artist statement, Ray Barrett cites an early experience at the University of Missouri as a significant influence on his artistic practice. As a student of Dr. Robert Williams (who coined the term "Ebonics"), Barrett took the *B.I.T.C.H.* test, (Black Intelligence Test of Cultural Homogeneity), and subsequently experienced a shift in the way he looked at language. This new perspective is evidenced in these drawings, where language is shown to be the social currency of contemporary tribal membership: a form of a mask that reveals more than it conceals.

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**Ray Anthony Barrett** (USA, b. 1980) received his BA from the University of Missouri, Columbia (2003) and his MFA from Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland, Oregon (2011). This year, he was included in *Another Cats Show*, 356 Mission, Los Angeles, and *Unsparring Quality (Curated by Farrah Karapetian)*, Diane Rosenstein. Mr. Barrett participated in the Dakar Biennial, Dakar, Senegal (2010). Mr. Barrett lives and works in Los Angeles.