The Arts Club of Chicago is pleased to present the first survey of Gaylen Gerber’s Supports, an ongoing series in which the artist intervenes upon collected artifacts. Offering pause for reflection on a shared history, Gerber’s art is indebted to both the monochrome and the readymade. Supports features objects of diverse origin, each painted uniformly in institutional gray or white. Whether a mirror from the Kennedy winter White House, a Brazilian milagre, or a vintage coke bottle, each is undated and bears the title Support. Gerber’s attentive, almost “reverential” brushstrokes, as Roberta Smith has described them in the New York Times, render the objects visible in a new way. This survey elaborates on the decentralization of attention while it affirms the all-encompassing aspects of the artists’ practice.

For his exhibition at The Arts Club of Chicago, Gerber places the works in the gallery to suggest a cohesive visual field, yet at the same time, he differentiates each object through the regularity of its painted surface. The resulting installation encourages recognition of a shared reality, even as it enables diverse emotional responses to individual Supports, ranging from delight to distress. Gerber acknowledges the undertakings of vast cultural traditions as well as their often beautiful, sometimes poignant limitations. The exhibition further addresses a larger question about how and why objects so often remain compelling. The survey affirms the more inclusive aspects of the artist’s practice. The Supports emphasize the individual histories as well as reflect our perception of them in the present.

Gaylen Gerber has exhibited widely including monographic and cooperative projects at Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Musée d’Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg; The Art Institute of Chicago; Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago.

Image Credits: Gaylen Gerber, Support, n.d., oil paint on Goldwater campaign promotion (Barry’s View Mine Too), HRB Suppliers, Tucson, Arizona, Gold card, die-cut in the shape of horn-rim glasses with Republican elephant, 1964, 3 ¼ x 6 ½ x 5 1/8 inches (8.3 x 15.8 x 13 cm); Gaylen Gerber, Support, n.d., oil paint on milagre or ex-voto of a head with an abnormal growth, Sertão region, Brazil, terra-cotta, early 20th century, 4 ¾ x 3 ¼ x 3 ¼ inches (12.1 x 8.2 x 8.2 cm). Photographs courtesy of the artist and Tom Van Eynde.

The Arts Club of Chicago is located at 201 East Ontario Street. Exhibitions are free and open to all. Gallery hours are Tuesday-Friday 11:00 am - 6:00 pm, and Saturday 11:00 am - 3:00 pm.

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