

Dan Dowd

Resurface

May 16–June 19, 2024

Level Two

Magenta Plains is pleased to present *Resurface*, Dan Dowd's debut solo exhibition at the gallery. Consisting of work from 2012–2024, *Resurface* exemplifies the consistent thrust of Dowd's practice. Made entirely of found materials, Dowd's wall-mounted assemblages combine clothing, rubber, leather, metal, and other kinds of worldly ephemera into unique, carefully considered compositions. This body of work speaks to the histories embedded in these objects, locates them within our consumption-heavy material culture, and places an emphasis on re-use and recreation as alternative paths forward.

Dan Dowd's investigation into material takes a multi-fold path in *Resurface*. Ubiquitous throughout the work are pieces of clothing, often clearly used or otherwise maculated, which suggest the bodies they once inhabited. However they have been stretched and re-formed, suggesting the human through their materiality as opposed to their form. These are combined with other found objects to further re-contextualize the works. For example, in *The big house III* (2022), Dowd combines a woolen flannel shirt, a piece of rusted tin ceiling, and a piece of heavily patterned drapery into a single elegant composition. Each material exhibits an exceedingly distinct texture and surface quality, and yet together, layered over one another, visual echoes bounce across the surface of the piece. This kind of intuitive matching between materials forms the basis for Dowd's practice.

Resurface centers another key component of Dowd's practice, the history of labor built into each and every object in the exhibition. Each piece of clothing or tire rubber carries with it the effort and energy put into making it—by re-utilizing these materials, Dowd extends their lifespan, removing them from the endless glut of waste which predominates our society. The transformation of the discarded to the elevated is a central precept of contemporary art, yet Dowd engages this theme not for its aesthetic daring but as an homage to the original craftsman and the environment which provided the raw substance of these objects. Dan Dowd's practice is an exercise in contemplative re-use, and as such charts a course toward finding (or re-finding) joy in those things we leave behind.

Dan Dowd draws inspiration from materials and patinas, found objects and fragments. Histories recorded on material surfaces through manufacture, use, wear and maculation inform the choices he makes in his idiosyncratic assemblages. Suggestions of body parts, humor, and identity play supporting roles to the materiality of Dowd's practice, which emphasizes repair, re-use, and transformation as key themes.

Dan Dowd has been working as an artist since moving to Phippsburg, Maine in 2001, and has worked as a security officer at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art since 2007. Recent solo and two-person exhibitions include *Found and Gifted*, Danforth Museum, Framingham, MA (2021–22); *Paintings & Assemblages*, with Katherine Bradford, Caldbeck Gallery, Rockland, ME (2021); and *Thick-Skinned*, University of Maine Museum of Art, Orono, ME (2016). He has also been included in group exhibitions at Caldbeck Gallery (2024, 2023, 2022); bG Gallery, Santa Monica, CA (2021, 2019); Maine Maritime Museum, Bath, ME (2018); Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens, East Boothbay, ME (2014); and the Danforth Museum of Art (2013). The artist lives and works in Phippsburg, ME.