MEET THE MENTORS:

DEREK OWENS

ARTIST AND EDUCATOR

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ABOUT DEREK

Derek Owens is a mixed media artist and writer whose practice explores how processes, fixations, and recurring motifs unfold across time. Working primarily in series, he draws from a wide range of source materials, including flea market ephemera, found text, street detritus, and childhood drawings. His methods are equally varied, embracing ink and oil stick alongside collage, digital composites, scissors, and glue. Sampling, remixing, and layering serve as central strategies through which fragments of memory, image, and narrative are reassembled into new forms.

Recurring themes emerge throughout the work's titles and accompanying texts, often centering on three interconnected areas of inquiry: memory, temporality, solastalgia, and the Anthropocene; hollow earth theories, planetary imaginaries, and the mind as its own cosmos; and kitschy spiritualism, clairvoyant poetics, haunted houses, and the uncanny.

As a writer, Owens has published fabulist fiction, experimental poetry, memoir and family biography, as well as academic scholarship on writing instruction, arts-based research, and sustainability as a pedagogical ethic.

Owens teaches at St. John's University in New York and previously taught at Harvard University. He holds an M.A. and Doctor of Arts from the University at Albany and an MFA from Transart Institute in partnership with Plymouth University. He lives and works on Long Island, New York.