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RUSH BAKER IV: American Sunset

March 19 – April 30, 2022

Washington, DC - HEMPHILL is pleased to announce the exhibition *Rush Baker IV: American Sunset*, opening on Saturday, March 19, 2022 and on view through April 30, 2022.

American Sunset is politically charged. Reflecting upon the cause and effect of abolitionist John Brown's 1859 raid on Harper's Ferry which accelerated the nation into civil war, Baker has created a cycle of paintings conjured from a process where representation generates abstraction. Large and colorful, both beautiful and terrifying, his paintings possess the currents of emotional energy felt within the present-day fight for social justice. Baker interleaves the events and geography of Harper's Ferry with textural applications of acrylic material, varying between matte and glossy, dark and light. The bits and pieces of representational content still visible in his work are caught in a storm of spinning, broken alternately disappearing and reappearing parts. Although the show references a historical event, it could not be more of the present.

Baker's ability to depict this maelstrom from an observer's distance places the viewer in the calm at the eye of a storm. A position where the question arises; "how will you respond when the next wall of the storm overtakes us?" Like exhibitions of other great political artworks, *American Sunset* is both lamentation and inspiration.

Rush Baker IV (American, b. 1987) has exhibited his work both nationally and internationally, including solo exhibitions at Scaramouche Gallery and The Cooper Union in New York City, Honfleur Gallery in Washington DC, and in group shows at The Third Line Gallery in Dubai, The Harvey B. Gantt Center in Charlotte, NC, Bowie State University, MOCADA in Brooklyn, NY, Koki Arts in Tokyo, and Yale University. *American Sunset* is the artist's second solo exhibition at HEMPHILL. He received a BFA from The Cooper Union for Advancement of Science and Art in 2009 where he received the Jack Stewart Memorial Prize for Excellence in Painting, and an MFA from Yale University in 2012, where he received the Elizabeth Canfield Hicks Award for outstanding achievement in drawing or painting from nature. Baker lives and works in Hyattsville, MD.

Rush Baker IV, *John Brown*, 2021, acrylic, paper, resin and plaster on canvas, 60" x 72"

HEMPHILL was founded in Washington DC in 1993. The exhibition schedule features modern & contemporary art in all media by artists ranging from emerging to mid-career to modern masters.

GALLERY HOURS

HEMPHILL is open Tuesday - Saturday from 12pm – 5pm and by appointment.

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