

# REGEN PROJECTS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## WALEAD BESHTY

*Profit & Loss*

**November 7 – December 21, 2024**

Press preview with the artist: Thursday, November 7, 11:00 am

Opening reception: Thursday, November 7, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Gallery hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Regen Projects is pleased to present *Profit & Loss*, Los Angeles-based artist **Walead Beshty**'s fifth solo exhibition with the gallery. Beshty's diverse practice examines the overlapping systems of representation, image production, and networks of circulation that produce the dominant structures of material and visual culture. This exhibition focuses on select bodies of work from Beshty's photographic, painting, and drawing practices that explore questions of migration, the construction of value, and the varied meanings of worth.



**Image:** Walead Beshty, *Il Sole 24 Ore, Giovedì 28 Settembre 2023; Palaia Italy, 2023*. Oil pastel and oil on newspaper. 20 3/4 x 27 1/2 inches (50.8 x 70 cm).

Beshty's "Bandit Sign Painting" series takes its title from a term denoting any sign attached to public or private property without official approval. These signs may be innocuous or mundane — postings for apartments for rent or freelance services — but they can also indicate more nefarious ventures, solicitations for shadowy businesses that hint at an illicit economy operating at the margins. Beshty began collecting these signs during the global financial crisis of 2007 – 2008. The signs were free, easily available, and served as a real-time index of a seminal historical moment. The artist stenciled them onto the front pages of newspapers and used oil stick to smear thick layers of color on the easily smudged newsprint; the oil soaked through the newsprint, rendering the paper translucent and creating a viscous protective layer. By enlarging the signs proportionally, Beshty creates an effect whereby the letters seem to loom threateningly over the viewer — a visual mimesis of the perceptual experience of those who might seek out the signs in moments of desperation. The amalgamation of materials, including whole newspapers, glue, and personal documents, are painted in tones that recall the Southern California landscape.

In dialogue with the "Bandit Signs" are Beshty's cigarette drawings. As with the works employing the bandit signs, Beshty focuses here on a specific element of material culture to draw out larger implications about value and worth. Beshty began the series while installing an exhibition in Naples. During this time, it was discovered that Italian Coast Guard crews tasked with intercepting refugees crossing the Mediterranean from Libya were themselves implicated in a coordinated smuggling operation in which cigarettes and prescription drugs such as Viagra and Cialis purchased on the black market were being smuggled into the European Union. The illegal dumping of refugees in international waters was used as a cover for their smuggling operation, creating an unsettling parallel in which the value of the commercial object was concurrent with the callous devaluation of human life.

If the "Bandit Sign Paintings" and cigarette drawings draw our focus to major global and social phenomena, another body of work in the exhibition returns to the intimate and local. Black-and-white photographs taken on the street adjacent to Beshty's studio, situated on the dividing line between Boyle Heights and Commerce, show the point of confluence between a suburban residential neighborhood and a zone of heavy industry. Makeshift shelters and RVs line the street one after the other and are presented here frame after frame in a manner reminiscent of so-called "de-skilled" or "conceptual" photography from the 1970s. The inclusion of these photographs quite literally brings the exhibition's vast concerns — value and worth, humanity and commerce,

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geography and migration — back home, emphasizing that they are not foreign or distant, but rather part of a network of circulation in which we are all bound up.

Profit & Loss is on view at Regen Projects November 7 – December 21, 2024.

A statement by the artist with further information can be read here upon the opening of the exhibition:  
Beshty, Walead, "[Profit & Loss Statement](#)," 2024

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**Walead Beshty** (b. 1976, London, UK) is an artist, writer, and curator working in Los Angeles.

Selected solo exhibitions include *Standard Deviations*, Kunst Museum Winterthur, Winterthur (2020); *Walead Beshty: Industrial Uniforms*, MAST Foundation, Bologna (2020); *Walead Beshty*, Musée d'art moderne et contemporain, Geneva (2019); *Walead Beshty*, Great Hall Exhibition, Institute of Fine Arts, NYU, New York (2015); *A Partial Disassembling of an Invention without a Future: Helter-Skelter and Random Notes in which the Pulleys and Cogwheels are Lying around at Random All over the Workbench*, Curve Gallery at the Barbican Centre, London, England (2014); *Securities and Exchanges*, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China (2011); *A Diagram of Forces*, Malmö Konsthall, Sweden / Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, Madrid, Spain (2011); and *Legibility on Color Backgrounds*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. (2009). His work was included in the 56th Biennale di Venezia (2015); the Tate Triennial (2009); and Whitney Biennial (2008). Beshty has organized exhibitions including, *On the Matter of Abstraction (figs. A & B): Parallel Exhibitions of Post-War Non-Figurative Art from the Collection*, Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA (2013); and *The Gold Standard* at MoMA PS1, Long Island City, NY (2006).

Work by the artist is featured in numerous permanent museum collections worldwide, including the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Guggenheim Museum, New York; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Henry Art Gallery, Seattle; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; Tate, London; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; among others.

From 2016 to 2018, Beshty curated an exhibition on the history of photography and technical image production that grew in scope and scale over the course of its presentation across three venues. First exhibited as *Picture Industry* as a part of the larger exhibition, *Systematically Open? New Forms for Contemporary Image Production*, at LUMA, Arles in 2016, the exhibition traveled under the title *Picture Industry* to the Hessel Museum, Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College in 2017, before returning to LUMA, Arles in 2018 in its largest iteration under the title *Picture Industry: A Provisional History of the Technical Image, 1844 – 2018*. A catalog and anthology edited by Beshty was published under the same title by JRPIRingier in 2018.

Recent publications include *Walead Beshty: Work in Exhibition 2011–2020* (2020); *33 Texts: 93,614 Words: 581,035 Characters, Selected Writings (2003–2015)* (JRPIRingier, 2016); *Industrial Portraits: Volume One, 2008–2012* (JRPIRingier, 2017).

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