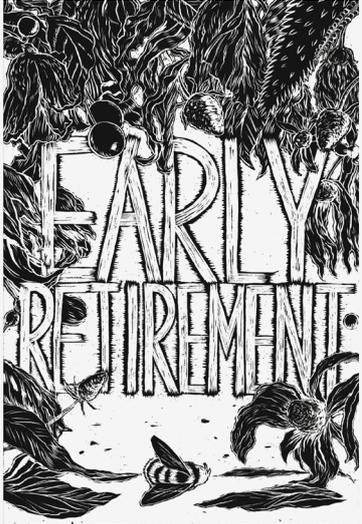


Edition Patrick Frey

Press Release

Mark Thomas Gibson

Early Retirement



Over the course of 2016, with the American presidential election looming ever-larger, Mark Thomas Gibson wondered: Why are there no utopias? Why are we no longer striving to create one? He began drawing at his kitchen table in search of answers to the question of the long-lost quest for utopia. *Early Retirement* begs the crucial question: how do we find the strength to come together against relentless adversity in the United States of America?

Early Retirement, narrated by a shadowy figure from American history, revolves around Mr. Wolfson, a werewolf and Doomsday prophet in New York City's street prophecy scene, and The Drummer, one of the three heralds of the Apocalypse. One day, The Drummer learns that the Truth has been delivered to Mr. Wolfson. Things quickly spiral out of control, leading to a three-way standoff between the Will of the People, the Will of Government and the Will of God.

Gibson's personal lens on American culture stems from his viewpoint as an artist, a black male, a professor at Yale, an American history buff and comic book nerd. All this fuels his exploration of American culture through the high and low visual languages of painting and comics to reveal a narrative that spells out our fabricated destruction. Gibson uses black ink to create stark contrasts and settings in which positive and negative space define the composition. He relies on a minimal aesthetic, playing off of both fine art and the comic book vernacular of sequential narrative. He rarely edits his drawings, trusting what goes down on the page to take form organically and tell a legible story, trusting his drawings to provide answers, to tell us the future, the truth.

"I want to have a conversation about our shared understanding that things need to change, and that everything is very much at stake. We are all in this together."

Mark Thomas Gibson, 2017

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For further information on picture usage or if you wish to receive a review copy, please contact: Gloria Wismer, Edition Patrick Frey.

T +41 (0)44 381 51 02 E wismer@editionpatrickfrey.ch