



February 26–April 9, 2022

**Mark Cooper**

***Unbounded: Angels in the Nursery***

Opening Reception: Saturday, February 26 / 6–9 PM / Free



How! Happening is pleased to present Mark Cooper's fantastical and ornate mixed-media installation *Unbounded: Angels in the Nursery*. The installation uses visual signifiers to suggest multiple subtexts—from the importance of experiencing boundless joy to addressing the many issues that challenge our present and our future.

The wildly diverse elements of this immersive experiential artwork are composed of an equally colorful array of materials that create the gestalt of the installation. The component parts reference the beauty and unpredictability of nature and reflect Cooper's diverse influences, from art and cultural history to biology, architecture, and cross-cultural exchange.

The biomorphic wooden sculptural forms suggest curio cabinets gone wild. The same shapes and images reappear in the quirky ceramic vessels and figures, and in the paintings and rice-paper relief forms on the wall that incorporate photographic and printed imagery tucked into their many layers. Considering this riot of shapes and colors and materials in relationship to each other, the notion of *a singular genius moment* is called into question, and the viewer experiences *a series of moments and events* that form the foundation for bringing new ideas to the conversation and questioning the hierarchy of value.

“I am interested in the conversation between the parts serving as triggers for individual viewer associations rather than presenting a linear narrative,” says Cooper. “My work is based on collaboration and the idea that ‘the whole is greater than the sum of its parts’—using collage, assemblage, and installation as a metaphor for working together in a complex world.”

In creating the individual components in collaboration with others and in collaboration with the materials themselves—responding to how they bend and fold—unexpected outcomes arise in the same way that bringing individuals from different disciplines together can lead to solutions beyond one specific approach.

“It is like an improvisational jazz piece,” says Cate McQuaid, writing in the *Boston Globe*. The conceptual framework brings individual voices together and references cultures and philosophies that allude to unbounded possibilities, joy, and love. A place of wonder and humanity, the installation is a reminder for all of us to be our best selves and to work together to heal our planet.

Cooper is an internationally recognized artist known for large-scale and site-specific installations and public commissions. His commissions include works for the Boston Children’s Hospital, Boston Medical Center, and Massachusetts Cultural Council; he has received a Gund Grant, Daynard Grant, and an Open Society Fellowship. In July 2020, Cooper completed three permanent large-scale marble sculptures for the Da Nang Fine Arts Museum in Vietnam. In 2006, he authored *Making Art Together* through Beacon Press.

Cooper’s major exhibitions include shows at the Vietnam National Fine Arts Museum; Vietnam University of Fine Arts; Da Nang Fine Arts Museum; Rough Point Museum—Doris Duke Mansion; Yuandian Art Museum; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City; Lesley University, Cambridge, MA; Street Museum, Seoul, Korea; Whitney Museum at Philip Morris; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; ICA Boston; Corcoran Gallery of Art; The Butler Institute of American Art; Peabody Essex Museum; DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum; City Museum of Paris; and WestLicht Museum, Vienna. The artist has had more than 100 solo and group shows combined.

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[How! Happening: An Arturo Vega Project](#)

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**Gallery Hours: Wed–Sun, 11–6 PM**