

GOOD MOTHER GALLERY

info@goodmothergallery.com

goodmothergallery.com

@goodmothergallery

5103 W. Adams Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90016

Good Mother Gallery is pleased to present *Ornamental Anger*, a solo exhibition by Los Angeles-based artist and special effects pioneer Gabe Bartalos.

In a sculpture workshop that amalgamates laboratory, mortuary, and playground, Gabe Bartalos shapes his obsessions into disturbing forms. His deranged monsters inhabit writer-director Frank Henenlotter's outrageous cult film series Basket Case. He conspired with visual provocateur Matthew Barney on The Cremaster Cycle, provided numerous prosthetic transformations for photographer Mark Seliger, and gave angular visages to David Byrne and St. Vincent that appeared on their Love This Giant album cover. Bartalos' self-produced feature films, *Skinned Deep* and *Saint Bernard*, were dizzying excursions into cinematic madness accentuated by grotesque imagery and absurdist humor. These achievements evince a surrealist touch, an assured command of mise-en-scène, and a diehard DIY ethos that has catapulted Bartalos beyond his humble midnight movie roots into the realm of mad auteur.

Ornamental Anger offers a small sample of the twisted creations manifesting in Bartalos' Atlantic West Effects stronghold, a wonderland-cum-carnival sideshow brimming with freakish monstrosities. It's a gateway into strange and wondrous possibilities borne of exquisite sculpting, an exacting work ethic, and a strong experimental imperative. This collection unearths the boundless depths of an artist who could have continued on a safe but limiting path of conventional splatter prosthetics; He sought, instead, expanded horizons through mastery of other mediums. The breadth of work in this exhibit makes the argument for deeper engagement with special makeup design within the larger artistic community where the precise details of Bartalos' craft can be appreciated up close.

These pieces transcend the already unconventional sculpting work Gabe is known for, confronting us with phantasmagoric tableaux, grotesque anatomy, and monuments to the weird that strangely connect us to our own fragile humanity. Enter to find "Hello Snot," a monolith forged from wrecked technology. "Wild Kingdom" reveals galaxies of viscous fluids contained in microscope slides. You will also be confronted with a cavalcade of distorted faces carved with intricate textures, dissected bodies layered in colorful viscera, and every day found objects transformed with all new meaning. Engaging with these works is a portal into Bartalos' twisted mind, a fluid space where ideas are given materiality forged from wood, bones, hair, wire, newspapers, glass, string, clay, foam latex, paint, oil, and more. These materials provide substance to fevered nightmares and structure to psychological turmoil. We are repelled, then fascinated by myriad anxieties embodied in these distressing configurations.

Bartalos is no tormented artist suffering for his art; He's too full of joy for that to be true. His exacting qualities are not shackles, but freeing methods of expression that find beauty in deformity, humor in the macabre, and confront us with the cruel adversaries embedded in our psyches. Upon resurfacing from Gabe's hallucinatory realm, we are compelled to reflect on humanity with deep melancholy, boundless wonder, and maniacal laughter spurred by a mad genius whose depth is on show at Good Mother Gallery in all its bizarre splendor.

-Text by Chris Hallock

Opening Reception: Saturday, May 9th, 2026 from 5pm-7pm

On View: May 9 - June 20, 2026

Good Mother Gallery - 5103 W. Adams Blvd

For more information or to request a digital catalog of available works, please email info@goodmothergallery.com

Artist Bio

Gabe Bartalos is from Westchester, New York, where he began his formation as a professional artist and a pioneer in the field of special makeup effects. Bartalos has worked across a wide array of disciplines, including practical film effects, creature design, and fine art sculpture, all of which have had a lasting impact on his creative output. His deep technical knowledge of synthetic materials was forged through decades of hands-on experience in his own studio, Atlantic West Effects. He currently lives and works in Los Angeles.

Gabe Bartalos

2024 *Destroy All Neighbors*, Special Makeup Effects Designer (feature Film, Dir. Josh Forbes)

2019 – *Saint Bernard*, Writer, Director, and Special Effects Designer (Feature Film)

2013 – *Abhorrence and Obsession*, Solo Exhibition/Career Retrospective, University Art Museum (UAM), Long Beach, CA

2013 — *Rattle Trucks*, (Music Video/Short Film, Mark Seliger)

2012 – *Jack and Diane*, Special Makeup Effects Designer (Dir. Bradley Rust Gray)

2008 – *Ren*, Live Performance Collaboration with Matthew Barney, Los Angeles, CA

2007 – *De Lama Lamina*, Special Effects Designer (Collaboration with Matthew Barney)

2006 - *Mercy Man* Producer and Makeup Effects (Feature Film)

2005 – *Drawing Restraint 9*, Special Effects Designer (Collaboration with Matthew Barney)

2004 – *Skinned Deep*, Writer, Director, and Special Effects Designer (Feature Film)

1994–2002 – *The Cremaster Cycle (1–5)*, Special Makeup Effects Designer (Collaboration with Matthew Barney)

1993–2003 – *Leprechaun Series (Parts 1–6)*, Lead Creature Designer

1993 – *Drawing Restraint 7*, Venice Biennale, Italy (Collaborator with Matthew Barney)

1990 – *Frankenhooker*, Special Makeup Effects (Dir. Frank Henenlotter)

1990 – *Gremlins 2: The New Batch*, Special Effects Crew (Rick Baker Studio)

1990–1991 – *Basket Case 2 & 3*, Creature Design/Effects (Dir. Frank Henenlotter)

1990 – Founded Atlantic West Effects (AWE), Sun Valley, CA

1988 – *Brain Damage*, Special Effects Design (Dir. Frank Henenlotter)

1988 – *Gorillas in the Mist*, Special Effects Crew (Rick Baker Studio)

1986 – *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2*, Special Effects Crew (Dir. Tobe Hooper)