Bozo the Clown Runs for President, 1984
Photo: Larry Harmon Pictures Corporation

On May 1, 1984, Bozo the Clown launched a campaign for president of the United States. That afternoon, dressed in full makeup and costume, he arrived at Columbia University in a 1977 Cadillac limousine accompanied by "secret service" men wearing suits and red clown noses. The college punk band Nasty Bozos '84 hosted the event and performed during the announcement. Earlier that day, Bozo-creator Larry Harmon appeared on *Today*, explaining that he went into children's television to become a "doctor of humor, love, peace, and understanding in this world." He further described his decision to run for president as a response to media calls to "put the real Bozo in the White House."

Kathryn Andrewvs
"Bozo"™ "The World's Most Famous Clown" Bop Bag with Occasional Performance (Blue Variation), 2014
Aluminum, vinyl, polyurethane, chrome-plated steel, and performance
Collection of Julie Miyoshi, Santa Monica

"Bozo"™ "The World's Most Famous Clown" Bop Bag with Occasional Performance (Black Variation), 2014
Aluminum, vinyl, polyurethane, chrome-plated steel, and performance
Hesta Collection, Switzerland

"Bozo"™ "The World's Most Famous Clown" Bop Bag with Occasional Performance (Pink Variation), 2014
Aluminum, vinyl, polyurethane, chrome-plated steel, and performance
Private collection

To create this series, Andrewvs received permission to officially license Bozo's image and filter it through a rainbow spectrum, but without his signature red hair. Andrewvs also inverted custom-made stools on top of each sculpture that can be used as props for performances. Andrewvs has imagined the stools as a platform for live sets in or around the sculptures by comedians, commenting on the current state of America.

Kathryn Andrews
WEE MAN FOR PRESIDENT aka
Historical Campaign Poster Painting No. 1
(The Bird to Bet On), 2015
Aluminum, paint, Plexiglas, and certified
film costume
Courtesy of the artist and David Kordansky
Gallery, Los Angeles

Part of a new series by the artist, this work combines automotive paint and a silk-screened picture on aluminum with the Captain America costume worn by actor Jason Acuña (aka Wee Man) in *Jackass: The Movie* (2002). The colors used by the artist take their cue from the film costume, while the silk-screened image hails from a graphic made by Currier and Ives—a firm that sold inexpensive prints to households across the United States between 1834 and 1907. The image depicts 1880 presidential candidate General W. S. Hancock as a game-cock, a pun alluding to the entertainment quality of the presidential campaign trail. With the additional reference to the male stunts of the *Jackass* franchise, history is colorfully filtered through the present to question constructions of masculinity and power.

Kathryn Andrews
THE JOKER FOR PRESIDENT aka Historical Campaign Poster Painting No. 4 (An Available Candidate), 2015
Aluminum, paint, Plexiglas, and certified film costume
Courtesy of the artist and David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles

This work combines a widely circulated 1848 Currier and Ives print, brightly painted colors, and a Hollywood film costume the artist purchased—a certified costume worn by Jack Nicholson's character, the Joker, in *Batman* (1989). The silk-screened image depicts either General Zachary Taylor or Winfield Scott sitting atop a pyramid of skulls while holding a blood-stained sword. Both generals were known for their violent war campaigns, and Taylor eventually won the Whig nomination and US presidency in 1848. By humorously yoking these two histories together, the three-dimensional wall work playfully links an American passion for entertainment to the nation's darker political enterprises.

Sammy Davis Jr. with President Richard Nixon, 1973
Photo: Ollie Atkins
Courtesy of The Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, National Archives and Records Administration

At age seven Sammy Davis Jr. made his acting debut in a 1933 race film called *Rufus Jones for President*. In the musical, rife with racist stereotypes, Davis's character, Rufus Jones, is elected president of the United States, only to find out he was dreaming. Forty years later, Sammy Davis Jr. made history as one of the first African Americans to spend the night in the White House as an overnight guest.

This black-and-white photomural captures a moment between Davis and Richard Nixon at a White House gala on May 25, 1973. A few months prior, Davis publicly hugged Nixon at a rally in Miami, causing a backlash for both of them. Davis had already been attacked for his short-lived marriage to a white woman in the 1960s and also ridiculed for supporting a Republican. In turn, Nixon was criticized for using a black celebrity for blatant political reasons when he was not known for caring about black voters.

Kathryn Andrewvs
Coming to America (Filet-O-Fish), 2013
Stainless steel, paint, found object, and certified film props
Rheingold Collection, Dusseldorf, Germany

In Coming to America (Filet-o-Fish), Andrewvs combines a McDonald's playground sculpture of the trademarked pirate character, Captain Crook, with two silver coins inserted into the ends of stainless steel tubes. The coins are props from the film *Coming to America* (1988) and bear the likeness of actor Eddie Murphy's character, Prince Akeem of the fictional African nation Zamunda. Pirates and coins naturally go together, but the work also makes a direct connection between McDonald's and McDowell's—the fast-food restaurant in the movie where Prince Akeem finally finds his wife among the working class of Queens, New York. As such, this sculpture speaks to complex, interrelated issues of class, displacement, and the American Dream.

Situated behind the photomural of Richard Nixon embracing Sammy Davis Jr., the sculpture of Captain Crook could also suggest other references, for instance, Nixon's famous 1973 denial of his involvement in the Watergate scandal, when he proclaimed: "I am not a crook."

Kathryn Andrews
Die Another Day, 2013
Polished stainless steel, glass, brass, and certified film prop
Courtesy of the artist

Die Another Day resembles a large dressing-room mirror. Its slick structure supports a prop bullet from the James Bond film of the same name. Through the juxtaposition of the found object and the artist-fabricated mirror, the work questions how simple things accrue significance in different contexts. The prop's meanings can shift in relation to its Hollywood history, the dressing table's seductive materiality (with references to various art historical movements, such as pop art and minimalism), and the viewer's presence.

Much like the bullet, the viewer's image is held by the mirror, inviting him or her to consider how personal identity is informed by perspective. In this exhibition, the artwork could relate to the "acting" involved in the performance of identity by politicians.

Kathryn Andrews
SPIDER-MAN FOR PRESIDENT aka Historical Campaign Poster Painting No. 5 (Backed to Win), 2015
Aluminum, paint, Plexiglas, and certified film costume
Courtesy of the artist and David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles

In this work, the artist appropriates a Currier and Ives image of Benjamin Harrison soaring to victory on the back of an eagle flying while holding a scroll that reads "Republican nomination." A certified film costume worn by Tobey McGuire in *Spiderman* (2002) is also embedded in a window on the side of the work. The subjects of masculinity and physical competition are accessed through super-natural, animalistic forces: an irradiated spider and a herculean eagle.

Like the other works in this series, the color palette of this work is derived from the iconic character's costume it contains. The work's façade, however, splits the image to reveal how interpretation can shift in light of simple formal differences—in this case, between the red and blue bifurcation.

Kathryn Andrews
Gift Cart, 2011
Stainless steel and rented props
Private collection, Belgium

With its references to finish fetish—a style developed in Los Angeles that emphasized polished metallic surfaces and other high-gloss finishing techniques—*Gift Cart* holds colorful, wrapped presents. Upon closer inspection, however, the "gifts" reveal a previous life. The wrapping paper is gently worn, as these objects have traveled far and wide, making appearances on many film and television sets. Rented from a Hollywood prop shop, they continue on in their contractual state—the artist has rented the objects for ninety-nine years and passed the agreement on to the work's current owner.

Placed next to an image of the White House Christmas tree, they prop up an exchange between Mr. T and former first lady Nancy Reagan. As sly doubles to the gifts depicted in the photomural, the hollow boxes might contain another season's presidential campaign promises.

First Lady Nancy Reagan and Mr. T
at the White House Christmas Party, 1983
Image © Bettmann/CORBIS

Mr. T—born Laurence Tureaud on the South Side of Chicago in 1952—understood early in his professional life that self-branding could lead to opportunity. Adopting the traditional mohawk haircut of the African Mandinka warrior and at times wearing up to $300,000 worth of gold chains and jewelry, Tureaud invented his own persona, Mr. T, and capitalized on race and class identity markers as signs of power. Mr. T worked as a bodyguard for many celebrities before becoming a well-known actor and political advocate for children, discouraging the use of drugs.

Anne Francis Robbins, born in 1921, adopted the screen name Nancy Davis in the 1940s and subsequently starred in several major Hollywood movies. In 1981, when her husband, Ronald Reagan, was elected the fortieth US president, she took up a new role: First Lady of the United States.

In this surreal scene, Reagan sits on Mr. T's lap at the White House Christmas party. Mr. T is dressed as Santa Claus for the occasion, during which he gave Reagan her own "Gentle Giant" Mr. T action figure.

The wall works presented here are part of a larger series that investigates the figure of the American hobo. After researching historical images of hobo clowns and migratory workers from the early 1900s, Andrews gathered a cache of costumes and worked with a stylist to construct the fictitious historic characters. The artist put out a casting call for older men, and had one image from each shoot silk-screened onto a sheet of Plexiglas. Andrews then populated the top register of the custom-designed frames with found or fabricated objects—such as flags, campaign buttons, beer cans, lottery tickets, and candy wrappers—that resonate visually and conceptually with the image they accompany.

Kathryn Andrewvs
Hobo (Re-elect the President), 2014
Ink on paper and Plexiglas, aluminum, paint, and mixed media
Collection of David Kordansky and Mindy Shapero, Los Angeles

For *Hobo (Re-elect the President)*, Andrewvs employed a multicolor striped background and depicted an African American hobo figure. The American flag as gay pride symbol is folded in the register above with a selection of buttons that showv support for various causes. Some of them, such as "Year of the Woman '92," allude to groups that have often been denied access to equal rights, mocking the idea that any citizen can be elected to office.

Kathryn Andrews
Hobo (Santa's Helper No. 2), 2014
Ink on paper and Plexiglas, aluminum, paint, and mixed media
Collection of Laurence Chandler

The red, white, and blue color-scheme of *Hobo (Santa's Helper No. 2)* evokes the American flag. Atop the work's colorful stripes is a gray clown who can be read as either laughing or crying. The work's upper register is populated with crushed Budweiser beer cans and red, white, and blue Christmas lights, calling into question close ties between nationalism and consumerism.

Kathryn Andrews
Tropical Hobo, 2014
Ink on paper and Plexiglas, aluminum, paint, and mixed media
Collection of Greg Hodes and Heidi Hertel

Tropical Hobo, with its garish pink and blue palette, investigates how certain colors evoke entrenched gender associations and moods. Here, the idea of "feeling blue" appears to be suggested by the hobo's expression. In addition, the overwhelming number of candy wrappers—with their "tropical" flavors—verge on the point at which sweetness becomes sickness. These riffs, combined with the hobo's historic association with poverty and homelessness, critique a fast-food nation in search of cheap and easy pleasures.

Kathryn Andrews
Hobo (The Candidates), 2014
Ink on paper and Plexiglas, aluminum, paint, and mixed media
Collection of Rodney D. Lubeznik

Hobo (The Candidates) refers to actual past presidential candidates through the inclusion of campaign buttons. As with *Hobo (Re-Elect the President)* (2014), again the American flag appears in the colors of the rainbow with pins from the campaigns of Jimmy Carter, Michael Dukakis, and Al Gore—each button matching one of the flag's stripes. How might a specific color complement or contradict the ideals of a candidate? For instance, purple is often associated with royalty, though this attribute may work against a more populist presidential appeal.

Kathryn Andrews
Lethal Weapon, 2012
Stainless steel, paint, and certified film prop
Hammer Museum, Los Angeles

Through a hole cut out on one side, viewers may peer into the shadowy cavern of *Lethal Weapon*'s cylindrical form to see a decommissioned prop from the 1987 film that lends its name to the title of the work. As one looks past the reflective surface into the darkness, the idea that a polished veneer (whether a sculpture or a person) can be used to camouflage something dangerous, even deadly, is evoked. The interplay between the work and the surrounding image of the Oval Office, suggests that the viewer and the viewed are constantly "under the gun," intimating histories of government-sanctioned violence and presidential assassination.

Oval Office during the Reagan Administration, The White House, 1981–89
Photo: Jack E. Boucher

US presidents have long conducted their business in the Oval Office, the ultimate seat of American political power. By mimicking its oval shape, the mural creates a space reminiscent of the actual room, but the illusion falls flat. The possibility of entering is denied: the office is only an image, reminding us of the barriers, physical and societal, that bar entry to the location. With the placement of the sculpture *Lethal Weapon* (2012) in the center of the space, the image of the Oval Office is reflected, along with the images of each viewer, thereby temporarily placing them in the position of power, albeit only through a play of images and reflections.

Kathryn Andrews
October 16, 2012
Chrome-plated steel, magnets, and balloons
The Eugene Sadovoy Collection

October 16 is a metaphor for the cyclical and, at times, fleeting nature of authority. The artist has handed over responsibility for its appearance to its owners through a set of instructions that accompany the artwork. For example, freshly filled helium balloons can be attached by the owners of the sculpture each year on the date of its title (its birthday). The balloons deflate over time and can be left to dangle limply from the wall-mounted gate. In this context, the work calls to mind the end of the presidency: the "party" is over, though it will inevitably begin again.