

# OVERDUIN & CO.

## PRESS RELEASE

Will Benedict

“Bad Weather”

September 13<sup>th</sup> – October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Reception: Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 6-8pm

Overduin and Co. is pleased to present “Bad Weather,” a solo exhibition by Will Benedict. This is the artist’s first exhibition at the gallery and elaborates on a recent public art project, also titled “Bad Weather,” which consists of 240 posters commissioned for the 2015 Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts.

In 1997, integrative biologist Tyrone Hayes was hired by Syngenta, the world’s largest manufacturer of atrazine, to study the biotechnology company’s then-nascent herbicide. When Hayes discovered that atrazine causes numerous cancers and impaired fertility in laboratory tests on frogs and was potentially dangerous for use on human food supplies, he ended his relationship with the company and published his research. Hayes’s life would be forever changed as the weight of the entire pharmaceutical and fertilizer lobby, and various radical right-wing groups came down on him to prevent his findings from tilting the risk / benefit balance away from one of the most profitable herbicides in the world. Syngenta launched a near decade-long assault on Hayes’s reputation and research through numerous well-funded smear campaigns and character assassination plots, causing him to endure acute personal suffering, paranoia, and anxiety. However his work would ultimately be validated as Syngenta and other biotech producers have been banned from producing or selling atrazine in the European Union and have been forced to settle numerous contamination lawsuits in the US.

The exhibition “Bad Weather” explores how the language and imagery used to describe general conditions like climate and environment have become vehicles for particular political and economic interests. The interplay of disparate elements in the exhibition—posters, paintings, relational sculptures—is suffused with a paranoid aura as questions are raised regarding the means by which ostensibly empirical information or objective concepts can be manipulated and absorbed for political effect.

Will Benedict is an artist living and working in Paris, France. He was born in Los Angeles in 1978 and received his BFA from Art Center in Pasadena in 2004 and attended the Städelschule in Frankfurt from 2004 to 2006. He has had recent solo exhibitions at Bortolami Gallery in New York, Bergen Kunsthall in Bergen, Norway, Gio Marconi in Milan, Balice Hertling in Paris, and dependance in Brussels. He was recently selected for a commissioned public art project to be included in the 2015 Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic arts in Ljubljana, Slovenia. As a corollary to his artistic practice, he and artist Lucie Stahl have run a gallery space in Vienna called Pro Choice, which has hosted regular exhibitions and events since 2011 and plan to shift the project to London by the end of 2015.

