

# MARVIN GARDENS

1532 DECATUR STREET, RIDGEWOOD, NY 11385

## 'DOWN THE WAY'

RORY BARON

September 8 - October 8, 2017

Opening Friday,  
September 8 | 7:00-9:00 p.m.



Marvin Gardens gladly presents "Down the Way," a solo exhibition featuring sculptures by artist Rory Baron.

Hailing originally from Elyria, Ohio, a small suburb slightly south and east of Cleveland, Rory Baron draws inspiration from the architecture of his hometown—the cookie cutter houses, highways, and strip malls—infusing these mundane motifs with elements of mysticism.

When borrowed by Baron, features of these anonymous and soulless structures are transformed into unique characteristics, emblematic of the wider world. Sourcing materials from industrial emporiums like Home Depot, the artist creates work that on the surface resembles a common commercial aesthetic, while also hinting toward more universal symbolism.

"Chariot", which dominates the gallery's main space, immediately conjures associations of white picket fencing or adirondack chairs, as well as *Star Trek's* Starship Enterprise. "Tree", constructed out of found natural objects from the woods of Ohio, resembles a metaphoric symbol of justice, weighed on one end by a meticulously handcrafted pinecone, an evergreen seed that while innocuous in many a wooded suburbia, also has links to Ancient Egyptian mythology.

Shared commonalities between cultural histories are key reference points throughout Baron's work. The contemplative void of "Lantern", which sits on a pedestal in the back room, is marked with specks of chipped paint. The off-white and yellowed colors were a popular choice for 60s design interiors—used to mask the effects of indoor cigarette smoke—and are also prominently featured on the flag of the Navajo Nation. Nearby "Nomad", with its hooded aperture and appointed star, and "Woodsman #2", made from manufacturally bonded lumber scraps, simultaneously allude to both everyday icons like mailboxes and far-flung totemic woodland wardens.

Baron recontextualizes our nostalgic ideas of home and domestic bliss into a richer and shared human history, urging viewers to observe a beauty in environments that may have otherwise been unintended.