

## *By Your Side: DAN DOWD* Parsonage Exhibition Explores Queer Identity through Art made from Vintage Car Parts

SEARSPORT, MAINE -- The Parsonage Gallery opens its spring season with *By Your Side*, a solo exhibition by Maine artist Dan Dowd. All are welcome to an opening reception from 4-6pm on Saturday, March 7, with current exhibitions running through May 3.

In the upstairs gallery, Dowd presents a sensitive exploration of memory and identity through an unexpected medium: parts from his beloved vintage Saab automobiles. A lifelong automobile enthusiast who has exclusively driven the Swedish brand for decades, Dowd transforms car interiors into intimate assemblages that reflect on personal milestones, companionship, and the passage of time.

Coming of age as queer man, Dowd recalls that the unique, stylish visual identity of the SAAB echoed his own self-conception as someone who was "not part of the masses." The exhibition's centerpiece is a mesmerizing video work that plays footage of a car being crushed at a scrapyard in reverse. The silent film transforms an act of obliteration into something tender and transcendent, offering a promise of renewal.

In the downstairs gallery, The Parsonage has extended its Maine Ecology & Art Residency (MEAR) Exhibition, in partnership with Seguinland Institute. The exhibition features former MEAR residents Alicia Ethridge, Eileen Ryan, Brian Smith, and Holden Willard. This collaboration brings together artists whose work engages deeply with ecological questions and the natural world of coastal Maine. It features paintings, sculptures, and a site-specific installation investigating emotional responses to being alone in the New England woods.

The Parsonage Gallery exhibits dynamic work by a diverse slate of contemporary artists, with a special emphasis on issues of ecology and spirituality. It is directed by Dr. Aaron Rosen and is a program of Our Common Foundation, a registered 501(c)(3). The gallery is open 11am-sunset daily.



Dan Dowd, *1966943MSR*. SAAB parts, spray paint, fabric. Courtesy of Caldbeck Gallery.



Dan Dowd, *By Your Side*. Still image from black and white video. 5:17. Courtesy of Caldbeck Gallery



Installation image of *By Your Side*: Dan Dowd, Parsonage Gallery.