

Robin Rhode

having been there

September 17–November 8, 2014

407 Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong



Robin Rhode, *Birdman*, 2014, mounted c-print, 29.53 x 45.28 inches (76 x 115 cm). Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York and Hong Kong.

Hong Kong, August 19, 2014 —**Lehmann Maupin is pleased to present *having been there*, Robin Rhode's debut exhibition in Hong Kong.** Continuing the artist's engagement with complex social and political issues, this exhibition also explores Rhode's notions of permanence and ephemerality as seen through his unique marks and gestures. In addition to a selection of photographic works and wall drawings, Rhode will premiere a new animation created specifically for his Hong Kong exhibition. **The artist will be present for an opening reception on September 17, 6-8PM.**

Rhode, who was born in South Africa and is based in Berlin, engages a variety of visual forms including photography, performance, drawing, and stop-motion animation to create engaging and poignant narratives. Rhode's experience as a member of one of the first post-apartheid generations in South Africa has been a major influence on his work, leading him to approach topics such as poverty and violence from a personal perspective. His work features imagery of everyday and consumer objects, such as paper clips, light bulbs, and champagne flutes, found in desolate urban settings as a reference to his upbringing, but also to broader universal ideas including desire, luxury, and the influx of consumerism into South African society. Working within the contexts of Johannesburg and Berlin—cities undergoing significant social and political changes—Rhode's artworks embrace a

vibrant spontaneity and are infused with both the language of the street and the dynamics of body-based performance art of the 1970s.

The exhibition title is a reference to a quotation of cultural theorist Roland Barthes who wrote, referencing the depiction of photographic subjects, “photography set up, not a perception of the *being there* of an object...but a perception of its *having been there*.” Rhode’s photographs, in which he increasingly appears, though often in disguise, explore this idea further. By inserting himself into the photographic image and through his mark making, Rhode creates records and traces of “having been there.”

In addition to photographic pieces, the exhibition includes a selection of wall drawings, created first in vinyl and subsequently drawn over in oil crayon. Highlighting Rhode’s focus on spontaneity and gesture, these works capture the playful spirit of his practice. As with the photographs, these works reinforce the exhibition’s central theme, replicating traces and references of the imagery featured in Rhode’s photographs upon the gallery’s walls.

Rhode has also created a new animation that examines aspects of established Chinese myths, weaving a tale of struggle, of growth, and ultimately of evolution. Highlighting themes frequently referenced in the artists’ work such as reinvention and transformation, this animation refines Rhode’s relationship to a medium with which he is often associated.

About the Artist

Robin Rhode (b. 1976, Cape Town, South Africa) was raised in Johannesburg and graduated from the South Africa School of Film, Television and Dramatic Arts Johannesburg in 2000. His first major museum solo show was at Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany in 2007, and Rhode has since had major solo exhibitions at a number of important museums around the world including the Hayward Gallery, London (2008); the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio (2009); the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles (2010); the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia (2013); and the Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, New York (2014). He has participated in notable group exhibitions including *New Photography*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2005); the 51st Venice Biennale (2005); *Staging Action: Performance in Photography Since 1960*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2011); and the 2012 Sydney Biennale. His work is included in numerous public collections, including the Castello di Rivoli, Turin; Centre Pompidou, Paris; The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Miami Art Museum, Florida; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. The artist lives and works in Berlin, Germany.

About Lehmann Maupin

Founded in 1996 by partners Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin, Lehmann Maupin has fostered the careers of a diverse group of internationally renowned artists, both emerging and established, working in multiple disciplines and across varied media. With three locations—two in New York and one in Hong Kong—the gallery represents artists from the United States, Europe, Asia, South America, Africa, and the Middle East. Known for championing artists who create groundbreaking and challenging forms of visual expression, Lehmann Maupin presents work highlighting personal investigations and individual narratives through conceptual approaches that often address such issues as gender, class, religion, history, politics, and globalism.

Current & Upcoming Exhibitions

Do Ho Suh, *Drawings*, September 11-October 25, 2014, New York, 26th Street & Chrystie Street

Kader Attia, *Show your injuries*, November 7-December 13, 2014, New York, 26th Street & Chrystie Street

For more information on Lehmann Maupin artists, please contact Graham Newhall at +1 212 255 2923 or visit lehmannmaupin.com