

ALEX PRAGER

Part Two: Run

Palm Beach

November 19-December 11, 2022



Alex Prager, *Run*, 2022. Film still. Courtesy Alex Prager Studio and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, and London

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Lehmann Maupin presents *Part Two: Run*, an exhibition of new photographs, films, and sculptures by Los Angeles-based artist Alex Prager. The multi-part exhibition will culminate in the debut of Prager's ambitious new film at the gallery's New York location in January 2023. Directly responding to a period of cultural ambivalences and uncertainties, the exhibition urgently examines the collective will to exist and explores the opportunities for empathy, participation, and action present both within art and everyday life.

Throughout the ten photographic works that comprise *Part Two: Run* that will be featured in Palm Beach, Prager examines the cultural mythologies and archetypes that shape our shared existence. Fervently cinematic, works such as *Claire and Frances*, *Diner*, and *The West* craft richly developed characters and interrogate genres such as the noir and the Western as they probe contemporary concerns and anxieties. Occupying a tenuous relationship to time and place, the carefully staged figures remain suspended between the past and the present.

Across her practice, Prager crafts rich, often ambiguous narratives. Slyly suspended in action, Prager's carefully staged but ultimately open-ended scenes invite questioning and active engagement from viewers. Prager's work suggests a relentless, unyielding movement forward through time even in the face of suspended uncertainties and anxieties, but her nostalgic and cinematic body of work also evokes a notion of contemporary experience that looks to the past to interpret the present and explore themes about common humanity. The Palm Beach exhibition builds upon a solo presentation of the artist's work at Lehmann Maupin London earlier this year.

In this new body of work, Prager engages theatrical strategies and cinematic conventions, exploring how both our senses of self and our engagement with others are often mediated by identification with familiar narratives and tropes. Shot from above, *Mime* is a vivid, intricately orchestrated image of a group. The work's sharp angle renders the scene uncanny, at once exposing its artifice and undermining it. Present in the lower edge of the work is the titular mime, gesturing expressively with her hands, but the mime as the idea of a farcical drama is present in the entirety of the frame. In Prager's work, the mime is not only a character, but also, perhaps, a method for thinking through strategies of representation: here, and across Prager's practice, figures assume familiar postures and poses in order to inhabit character; to engage and reflect; and ultimately, to understand and empathize with others. Viewers, too, become active participants in Prager's works. At the center of *Mime* is

a woman with a camera, who faces the viewer and points her lens toward them. Here, as throughout the exhibition, Prager invites viewers into her visually and symbolically saturated works, suggesting that they, too, have critical parts to play.

The foundation for this new body of work is the artist's powerful new film, *Run*, which will be exhibited at the gallery's New York location in January 2023. Featuring musical compositions by Ellen Reid and Philip Glass and starring Katherine Waterston, the film deploys cinematic archetypes and absurdist humor as it examines human resilience in the face of catastrophe. An otherwise ordinary day in an uncannily generic setting erupts into chaos when a massive, mirrored sphere propels itself through a community. Here, forward motion is countered by retrospection, and figures collide into their own reflections in the sphere's surface, and Prager suggests a curative, collective reckoning with those forces outside of our control.

The exhibition is supported by WePresent, WeTransfer's digital arts platform. Additional support is provided by Arts & Sciences and Lavazza Calendar 2023.



Alex Prager, *Valley*, 2022. Archival pigment print, 24.5 x 24 inches.
Courtesy Alex Prager Studio and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, and London

Solo exhibitions of Prager's work have been organized at Lotte Museum of Art, Seoul, South Korea (2022); Lehmann Maupin, London, United Kingdom (2022); Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles, CA (2020); Fotografiska, Tallinn, Estonia (2020); Fotografiska, Stockholm, Sweden (2019); Fondazione Sozzani, Milan, Italy (2019); FOAM Fotografiemuseum, Amsterdam, the Netherlands (2019); Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, Russia, (2019); Musée des Beaux-Arts Le Locle, Le Locle, Switzerland (2018); The Photographers' Gallery, London, United Kingdom (2018); Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, IA (2017-2018); Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis, MO (2015); Galerie des Galeries, Paris, France (2015); Goss Michael Foundation, Dallas, TX (2015); National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia (2014); Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (2013); SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, GA (2013); and the FOAM Photography Museum, Amsterdam, the Netherlands (2012).

Select group exhibitions featuring her work include *Photography Is Art*, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, TX (2021); *Terminal*, City Gallery Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand (2020); *In Production: Art and the Studio System*, Yuz Museum, Shanghai, China (2019); *Good Night: Energy Flash*, Storage by Hyundai Card, Seoul, South Korea (2019); *Telling Tales: Contemporary Narrative Photography*, McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX (2016-2014); *Open Rhapsody*, Beirut Exhibition Center, Lebanon (2015); *The Noir Effect*, Skirball Cultural Center, Los Angeles, CA (2014); *No Fashion, Please: Photography Between Gender and Lifestyle*, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, Austria (2011); and *New Photography*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2010).

Prager's work is in numerous international public and private collections, including the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, TX; Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, OH; Elgiz Museum of Contemporary Art, Istanbul, Turkey; Fondation Carmignac Gestion, Paris, France; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA; Hood Museum of Art, Hanover, NH; Igal Ahouvi Art Collection, Tel Aviv, Israel; Kunsthaus Zürich, Switzerland; K11 Art Foundation, Hong Kong; Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles, CA; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia; North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, NC; Princeton University Art Museum, Princeton, NJ; Queensland Gallery of Modern Art, Queensland, Australia; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; The Sir

Elton John Photography Collection, London, United Kingdom; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

Prager has received numerous awards, including the FOAM Paul Huf Award (2012), The Vevey International Photography Award (2009), and the London Photographic Award (2006). Her editorial work has been featured in prominent publications, including Vogue, New York Magazine, and W, and her film series Touch of Evil, commissioned by The New York Times Magazine, won a 2012 Emmy award. Her first major public commission, Applause, for Times Square Arts: Midnight Moment, New York, took place in summer 2017.



Portrait of Alex Prager, 2022. Photo by Christopher Michel

ABOUT THE GALLERY

Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin co-founded Lehmann Maupin in 1996 in New York. Since Inception, Lehmann Maupin has served as a leading contemporary art gallery with locations in the U.S., Europe, and Asia. For over 25 years, Lehmann Maupin has been instrumental in introducing international artists in new geographies and building long-lasting curatorial relationships. Known for championing diverse voices, the gallery's program proudly features artists whose work challenges notions of identity and shapes international culture. Today, the gallery has locations in New York, Hong Kong, Seoul and London, as well as a team in mainland China. In the past year with growing opportunities in new markets, the gallery has opened seasonal spaces in Aspen, Palm Beach, Taipei, and Beijing.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Slat House, The Royal Poinciana Plaza
50 Cocoanut Row, Suite 122

November 2022–May 2023

Hours

Monday by appointment

Tuesday–Saturday, 11 AM–6 PM

Sunday, 12–5 PM



Exterior view of Lehmann Maupin Palm Beach, 2022. Photo by Oriol Tarridas