

GALLERI NICOLAI WALLNER

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Peter Land
New Video Works
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Galleri Nicolai Wallner is pleased to present a solo exhibition which comprises new video works by Peter Land.

Peter Land (b. 1966, Denmark) has been represented by the gallery since its inception in 1993. Working in a variety of medium, Land's practice explores archetypical representations of masculinity and identity—performative and otherwise. Often using himself and his body as a vehicle for these ideas within the work, Land puts forward increasingly relevant questions and thematics for us, the viewer, to examine and perhaps to answer.

With the new video works shown in the exhibition, Land steps out from behind the camera. An intentional choice to instead use stock imagery and sound creates an eerily familiar—yet dissociative—sensation. Stock images are generic visual materials specifically made to be used in commercials, business presentations and other forms of advertisement. For Land, these stock images function as readymades. In his hands, the seemingly never-ending feeling of these clips being played back-to-back creates the feeling of our being swept up in this loop.

In one video *17 Handshakes* (2023), each clip shows men in business suits shaking hands to a backdrop of pulsating elevator music. The backgrounds change slightly from boardroom settings to interior and exterior shots of skyscrapers, with glass, chrome and marble featuring prominently—markers of presumed success. The faces of these men are never shown, instead the tight cropping of each clip focuses on the handshake itself.

The repetitive nature of the handshakes shift our focus to the hands themselves. We find ourselves drawn in by the way in which the hands reach out to each other, the way in which they grasp each other, the intensity, the tightness of grasp, the directionality and the speed at which they shake each other, the duration, who pulls the other hand in and whose hand is pulled. The hands take on an almost phallic caricature—their gestures filled with sexual tension—as we anticipate and fill in the narrative of what will come next.

In the second video *Hope* (2023), we find ourselves once again in the slick bubble of the corporate world. Clips of men in business suits are shown again and again. Engaging with their phones, they react to presumed good news—a deal gone through, a raise, the start of a new venture. Smiling and confident, their body language radiates power. Upbeat music masks any auditory clues, restricting us to the imagery at hand.

In both of these loops, what on the surface is an incredibly recognised act moves beyond recognition, beyond parody or satire, and moves into the absurd. Throughout his career, Land has often turned to the act of repetition as a process of opening up existing meanings to build new ones.

In the context of these two works and with their use of stock imagery, we are confronted with the stereotypical representations of what it is to be a man who has success, who has power and ambition, a man who is confident—in other words, what it is to be a “model” man, what it means to be a man “in business”, sealing the deal and making the world go round. In each of the loops, these visual signifiers of what it is to be a man are stripped away, made hollow. Peter Land's position challenges these norms but intentionally does not suggest another way forward, instead moving towards a hopefully more open approach.

Peter Land (b. 1966, Denmark) has exhibited widely at prestigious institutions such as the Hayward Gallery (London), Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (Humlebæk), Moderna Museet (Stockholm), Mori Art Museum (Tokyo), National Gallery of Denmark (Copenhagen) Stadt Remscheid (Remscheid), Kunstpalais Erlangen (Erlangen), GL STRAND (Copenhagen), Salzburg Kunstverein (Salzburg) MAMCO Musée d'art moderne et contemporain (Geneva), and Museum of Modern Art Chicago (Chicago). In 2005, Land was invited to participate in the 51st Venice Biennale as part of the Danish Pavilion. His work can be found in the public collections of ARKEN Museum of Modern Art (Ishøj), ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum (Aarhus), Astrup Fearnley Museet (Oslo), Essl Museum (Klosterneuburg), FNAC (Paris), HEART Hearing Museum of Contemporary Art (Herning), Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art (Helsinki), Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (Humlebæk), Centre Pompidou (Paris), Museum of Modern Art (New York) and the National Gallery of Denmark (Copenhagen) among many others.