

## **ALEX KATZ / DARA FRIEDMAN**

January 11 – February 22, 2014

Opening reception:

620 Greenwich Street

New York, NY 10014

DARA FRIEDMAN

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In *PLAY*, (Part 1&2), 2013, 17 couples—some real-life couples, others paired by the artist, all of them actors—develop and play out scenes of intimacy. The poetic, intense, and humorous situations grow intuitively from a process of improvisational theater games created for the purpose.

With this new work, Friedman engages with actors and their ability to receive and transmit projected desires, while at the same time laying bare theatrical and cinematic devices with Brechtian pleasure. Created during Friedman's residency at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, *PLAY* was filmed at the museum's Billy Wilder Theater, in a hippie shack in Topanga Canyon, and on the streets of Los Angeles.

*PLAY* marks an important climax in Friedman's recent work, completing a trilogy of works with *Musical* (2007-8) and *Dancer* (2011). In *Musical*, singers catch us unaware in the street of New York, giving voice to their thoughts, while the city of Miami sets the stage for *Dancer*. Together the films show us a rhythm of life—showmanship and humility, aggression and tenderness, poise and wildness, all in equal measure.

*PLAY* is shot on Super 8 and high definition video in Color and black & white.

Part 1 : 30 minutes

Part 2 : 15 minutes

Born in 1968 in Bad Kreuznach, Germany, Dara Friedman now lives and works in Miami. Her work has been featured in solo exhibitions at Gavin Brown's enterprise, New York (2011, 2007, 2002); The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2013); Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Poland (2013); The Kitchen, New York (2005); Kunstmuseum, Thun, Switzerland (2002); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2002). The trilogy of works will be presented at MOCAD, Detroit in May 2014.

Friedman attended University of Miami, School of Motion Pictures (MFA); The Slade School of Fine Art, University College, London; Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main, Germany; and Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York.

PLAY was created during a residency at the Hammer Museum. The Hammer Museum's Artist Residency Program was initiated with funding from the Nimoy Foundation and is supported through a generous grant from The James Irvine Foundation.

ALEX KATZ

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Gavin Brown's enterprise is pleased to announce the opening, on Saturday January 11, 2014, of ALEX KATZ.

Marking the artist's third exhibition at the gallery, ALEX KATZ features a rare yet integral series of Katz's works—his cutouts.

Existing as painted portraits and freestanding relief sculptures simultaneously, these pieces represent a departure for the artist, whose famously flattened style of portraiture generally manifests on canvas. With these sculptures, Katz foregrounds this signature style literally, as the background that would typically accompany each portrait is entirely excised.

Katz created his first cutout quite by accident in 1959 when, unhappy with the composition of a portrait he was working on at the time, he cut out the painting's central figure to see how it might look affixed to another canvas. By removing the figure from a predetermined context, allowing it to exist in space as a discrete three-dimensional object, Katz recognized that his portraits could be viewed experientially for the first time. Excited by the possibilities this liberating gesture afforded, Katz continued to create cutouts through the 1960s, eventually shifting from wooden bases to aluminum ones.

The fifteen new works featured in this exhibition are the first significant group of cutouts to be made in over a decade. They feature an assortment of figures, depicted either singularly or as part of a couple. The vocabulary of film—the extreme close ups, dramatic perspectives, and framing—has had a particular impact on Katz, who has redeployed some of these tactics in his sculptures. By omitting, enlarging, repeating, and erasing, Katz reduces painterly language to the extreme, and

reproduces the immediacy and intimacy of film in so doing. Katz has said that sculpture "should be about light and motion," and in this group of works he accomplishes exactly that. The works achieve a weightless elegance that is all their own, dissolving form and expanding the picture plane to encompass the space surrounding each subject.

Alex Katz has been the subject of numerous major retrospectives and solo presentations over the course of his encompassing career, which has extended over more than half a century. In addition to his current show at Gavin Brown's enterprise, his work will appear in several solo exhibitions in 2014, including 356 S. Mission Rd in Los Angeles, the Tate Modern in London, and the Albertina Museum in Vienna. His work is included in the permanent collections of over one hundred important museums worldwide, including the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.; the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Tate Gallery, London; the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; el Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Tokyo; the Nationalgalerie, Berlin; Tate St. Ives, Cornwall; and Turner Contemporary, Kent.