

JESSE ASH
THE TWO SCENE

MAY 31 - JULY 12, 2014

OPENING: SATURDAY, MAY 31, 2PM - 8PM

PERFORMANCE: SATURDAY, MAY 31, 5PM

AVOIDANCE-AVOIDANCE (A PROJECT OF TRANSPARENCY) [SCRIPT 9]

DJIN SPANZERLA & EDUARDO MOSSRI



A little over one month ago, I had family, a home in paradise, and I lived in great comfort.¹

Mendes Wood DM is pleased to present *The Two Scene*, the first solo exhibition of the British artist Jesse Ash in Brazil. In collaboration with curator Carly McGoldrick, the exhibition forms the next phase of *Avoidance—Avoidance (A Project of Transparency)*, so far held at venues Index – Swedish Centre for Contemporary Art Stockholm; CAC Bretigny Paris; Arnolfini Bristol; Monitor Gallery Rome and the Museo Marino Manini; Florence. At each stage of the project a central script is reworked for two characters who reminisce upon their failed relationship, referring to material, personal and political forms of transparency. Based on a proposed commission by Universal Newsreel to filmmaker Mary Ellen Bute and her partner, cinematographer Ted Nemeth in 1936, the actors move and talk amongst surrounding sculptures, images and film.

The Two Scene exhibits new and existing works that draw from the ongoing *Avoidance—Avoidance* script and the Mendes Wood DM exhibition setting: a Modernist glass and concrete space set within a walled tropical garden. Taking place amongst Lemon trees, Bougainvillea and Orchids, the performance centres on the search for asylum as sanctuary, with surveillance and escapism relayed via hidden messages witnessed in garden flower arrangements and journeys through international airport terminals. Seduction, manipulation and the idea of saying too much lay claim to the veracity of content, surface and form.

¹ Edward Snowden, statement delivered at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport on applying for asylum in Russia, 12 July 2013.

Produced within a vernacular inspired by Bute's humble but experimental approach to early abstract filmmaking, an assembly of sculptures, plinths, photographs, false etchings and collages present a realm of screens and constructions. With object as prop and background as setting, a materiality of support and trust is interrupted by visual discrepancies and shifts in scale. Through introducing raw, natural materials and the mark of the artist's hand, *The Two Scene* focuses on human shape, movement and gesture. Punctuated by physical intimacy, sensations of displacement and belonging are triggered as the artist relocates and reuses the abstruse and the familiar.

Jesse Ash was born in 1977, London. He works and lives in London, UK.

The artist recent solo exhibitions include *Avoidance-Avoidance (A Project of Transparency)*, CAC, Bretigny, Paris, France (2013); *A Treatment for Outcomes*, with Sarah May, Cura. and Monitor Gallery, Metropolitan University, 41-47 Commercial Road (Aldgate East), London, United Kingdom (2013); *The Moveable Column*, produced and presented with Cally Spooner, Radio Programmes 3-6 broadcast on Resonance FM, London, United Kingdom (2013).

Ash's recent group exhibits include: *Modern Draperies*, South London Gallery, London, United Kingdom (2013); *The Moveable Column* with Cally Spooner, Tate Britain, London, United Kingdom (2013); *Sin motivo aparente*, CA2M, Madrid: Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, Madrid, Spain (2013); *SOUNDWORKS*, Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), London, United Kingdom (2012).