

# Johnen Galerie

## Andrew Grassie Fabrication

### Opening: Friday, 22 January 2016, 6-9pm

Marienstrasse 10, 10117 Berlin, Tue-Sat: 11am - 6pm  
[www.johnengalerie.de](http://www.johnengalerie.de)



© Andrew Grassie, *Fabrication: Handmade LA. With work by Charles Ray, 2015*

Johnen Galerie is pleased to present **Andrew Grassie's** second solo exhibition with the gallery.

Entitled *Fabrication*, it includes a series of 9 new paintings from 2014-2016 that depict specialized workshops, both industrial and artisanal, where art works are being produced. While previous paintings depicted works by other artists in institutional settings, namely in spaces which by their very power/nature can grant the status of art, this series is akin to art works' origin story, showing them before they emerge from the undifferentiated mass of non-art matter. The works being produced, some by well-known artists such as Martin Boyce or Charles Ray, are not always readily recognizable amidst their surroundings.

Despite, or perhaps as a function of the minute detail of Grassie's paintings, it is difficult to fix on any one detail. This visual effect, as if a unifying filter lay on the image, draws attention to the very foundation of Andrew Grassie's

on the image, draws attention to the very foundation of Andrew Grassie's practice: locating the site (here: time) of creation. The subject appears to be less the aspect of authenticity that relates to the nature of style or its absence but rather concerns the translation of an idea into art. At which point does the work of art come into being? When do the works being fabricated at these industrial or artisanal sites become fully realized works of art?

Andrew Grassie's paintings are based on photographs the artist has taken himself or in some cases found. Often they have been elaborately staged, although this effort is veiled by the ostensibly unassuming matter-of-factness the small, precisely painted works exude. The works are executed with egg tempera, a technique associated with pre-Renaissance panel paintings anteceding the development of oil paint. The color pigment is mixed with egg yolk creating a paint that dries very rapidly and remains relatively sheer. To create cover and solid colors therefore entails a time-consuming application of many layers to modulate the final image.

With the series *Fabrication* Grassie is drawing an analogy between conceptual art's post-studio practice and the artisanal workshop system of previous centuries. Especially, as Grassie's painting technique was preferably practiced in such workshop settings in early Renaissance Italy where a master would gather around him apprentices to prepare and often paint large sections of his output. Andrew Grassie's paintings often have a stillness that sometimes belies their subject matter, in the case of his new series, quite literally: the clamor of such sites of fabrication appears *visible* absent. The images have a timeless quality, even though they also suggest an action is taking place, that the inhabitants of these spaces had perhaps only briefly left. In this context, Grassie has spoken of an "airtight quality that creates a sort of aura of mystery around simple things," comparing the effect to a vacuum, "as if reality were wrapped in cling film or a layer of thick air."

**Andrew Grassie**, born in 1966 in Edinburgh. He received a BA Hons in Fine Art Painting at St. Martin's School and a MA in Painting at Royal College of Art. He lives and works in London. The artist teaches at City and Guilds of London Art School, and held visiting lectures at Manchester School of Art, Edinburgh College of Art, Goldsmiths College of Art, Chelsea School of Art, Royal Academy School of Art, Winchester School of Art, Newcastle Art School and Emily Carr Art School in Vancouver.

Recent solo shows include: *Andrew Grassie – Collected Works*, Rennie Collection, Vancouver (2012) and *Andrew Grassie: Painting as Document*, Talbot Rice Gallery, University of Edinburgh (2008). Selected group exhibitions include: *Return Journey*, Mostyn, Llandudno (2014); *Wundercamera*, The Holden Gallery, Manchester (2014); *Wundercamera*, Pitzhanger Manor, Ealing, London (2013); *Summer 2013: Collected Works*, Rennie Collection, Vancouver (2013); *Government Art Collection – Commissions: Now and Then*, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2012) and *The Story of the Government Art Collection*, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2012).

Story of the Government in Connection, Frankfurter Gallery, London (2012).

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**Image: Courtesy of the artist and Johnen Galerie, Berlin**

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