

PAULA COOPER GALLERY

# Matias Faldbakken

## *EUROPE IS BALDING*

FEBRUARY 18 – MARCH 19, 2016  
521 W 21ST STREET

NEW YORK – The Paula Cooper Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by Matias Faldbakken. The artist will debut a video entitled *EUROPE IS BALDING*, as well as a series of sculptures. The exhibition will be on view from February 18 through March 19, 2016, at 521 West 21st Street.

Matias Faldbakken's work conveys an intractable yet nuanced ambiguity that mines the tension between proposition and cancellation, aggression and retreat, and language and its abstraction into illegibility or absurdity. His aesthetic of reticence and refusal functions as a universal solvent of culturally established meanings and anchors his work in a rebuke of neat binary oppositions.

For his new video, *EUROPE IS BALDING*, Faldbakken shows a backlit-silhouetted figure reciting a narrative account to the camera. The individual's shrouded face recalls those techniques employed in news reporting, meant to conceal and protect the identity of the interviewee. Pitched down precisely to the point where it is rendered unintelligible, the witness' speech slips from the viewer's comprehension; his or her story collapses into semantic obscurity. Intercut with this 'interview' are images and footage, understood as supplementary evidence of the interviewee/storyteller's account. Yet, as the verbal storyline is abstracted, the image flow is unmoored from sense and structure; a bewildering non sequitur of incongruous imagery, ranging from the historical to the absurd, hovers between narrative progression and pure retinal feed. Though it borrows its building blocks from narration, the video ultimately fails to resolve into a singular meaning — the narrative drifts into the realm of the *scroll*.

The exhibition will include additional new sculptures from a series of "untileable" objects (created with disjointed bathroom tiles), including a dashboard, a wheelbarrow tray, and a pallet. Bearing evidence of the artist's (unskilled) handwork, these mass-produced items become open-ended signifiers: part ubiquitous manufactured commodity, part 'priceless' art object and part wreck.

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