

DAVID KORDANSKY GALLERY

Alan Michael

Res Gestae

December 17, 2011 — February 04, 2012

David Kordansky Gallery is pleased to announce *Res Gestae*, an exhibition of new work by Alan Michael. Concerned with a densely cross-referential network of reflection, repetition, and subtly conflicting stylistic choices, Michael's practice represents an investigative, even experimental, approach to the contemporary fascination with reference material and the narratives that accompany images and objects of all kinds. The exhibition will consist of oil paintings and oil and silkscreen works on canvas. Michael's attention to detail, and his deep understanding of the history of the medium, bring the work into conversation with a surprising lineage of photorealist, pop, and appropriation-based forbears.

Res Gestae, the show's title, is commonly understood as Latin for 'things done,' and was part of the Roman emperor Augustus's funerary inscription, itself regarded as an early, mortuary-inspired version of a CV. In legal terminology, the phrase is also used to describe facts incidental to a case but nonetheless admissible as part of deliberation. Michael seems to refer to both uses throughout the works made for the exhibition, in which the juxtaposition of images both directly and tangentially related to fashion poses questions about the formulation of artistic personae. Long interested in how branding reflects both the cultural landscape and the vertiginous carousel of subjectivity and self-identification, Michael takes an oblique look at the development of individual style. Of particular interest are the places and moments when general cultural ambience is on the verge of giving way to differentiations of celebrity or commercial success.

The exhibition itself functions as a kind of inwardly turned hall of mirrors. Images are repeated on several canvases, their color tones altered from one to the next; paintings of well-known figures like the designer Kenzo Takada or the stylist Terry Jones alternate with imagery that has been appropriated from fashion industry wholesale magazines or decontextualized advertising; and text-based works using images of a book about the cult midcentury designer J.M. Frank are seen alongside paintings of retro student fashion designs from the 1980s. The amateur, the subcultural, and the rarefied are treated with the same apparent objectivity, resulting in an evenness of tone that is all the more startling for its seeming detachment.

Even the technical elaboration of these works establishes a sense of disorientation, as Michael's essentially conceptual practice draws from strategies that can be read as antithetical to his concerns. This can be seen clearly in his willingness to incorporate repetition, and therefore reference to photographic reproduction, in the kind of technically accomplished photorealist painting style historically used to mimic photography, not enact its procedures from within. Though highly labor-intensive, these paintings do not prevent Michael from engaging altogether contemporary issues of seriality and authorship—to the contrary, they allow him to take on such issues from an uncannily embodied position.

Furthermore, the question of how an artist incorporates reference material is addressed in terms of influence as well as subject matter: techniques initially popularized by relatively unfashionable pop artists like Richard Hamilton or Alain Jacquet are utilized for their paradoxical ability to disrupt established connections between popular culture and artistic trends. While this allows Michael to engage in a wide-ranging critique of the uses of images, it also allows him to uncover the ways in

which subjectivity—i.e. the simultaneously inward and outward gaze that defines each viewer's position in the physical and ideological world at large—is a function of projections, visual and linguistic translations, and idiosyncratic attachments to certain signifiers of class and taste. This closeness of observation finds its analogue in the care and intensity with which Michael approaches the selection of his source materials, as well as the physical production of his work.

In recent years, Alan Michael's work has been featured in *Space Oddity*, CCA Andratx, Mallorca, Spain; *BigMinis: Fetishes of Crisis*, CAPC, Museum of Contemporary Art, Bordeaux, France; *Depression*, Marmes Centre for Contemporary Culture, Maastricht, Netherlands; *The Associates*, Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, UK; and *The Tate Triennial*, Tate Britain, London. In 2008 he was the subject of *Mood: Casual*, a solo exhibition at Tate Britain, and *Touch Void*, a solo exhibition at the Talbot Rice Gallery, University of Edinburgh. Other recent solo shows include exhibitions at HOTEL Gallery, London and Galerie Micky Schubert, Berlin. Michael lives and works in Glasgow.

DAVID KORDANSKY GALLERY

Alan Michael

born 1967, Glasgow, Scotland
lives and works in Glasgow, Scotland

EDUCATION

1992 - 1996
BA Fine Art, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, Dundee, Scotland

1996 - 1998
Masters of Fine Art, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, Scotland

1997
Study Exchange with Hunter College MFA Programme, New York, NY

1998
Artist Residency at Asterides - Systeme Friche, Marseilles, France

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

(* indicates a publication)

2012
Marc Jancou Contemporary, New York, NY

2011
Res Gestae, David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
Golden Turtle, Siakos-Hanappe, Athens, Greece

2010
HOTEL, London, England

2009
In A Rotterdam Cell, Galerie Micky Schubert, Berlin, Germany

2008
Alan Michael, Schürmann Berlin, Germany
Ritual In The Dark, with Stephen Sutcliffe, Hotel, London, England
Mood:Casual, Art Now, Tate Britain, London, England
Touch Void, Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland

2007
Decamp, David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
Space to Squabble, Galerie Micky Schubert, Berlin, Germany

2005
Stuart Shave / Modern Art, London, England
The Invention of Birth Control, Sorcha Dallas, Glasgow, Scotland

2003

Burlesque Schematic, Hotel, London

2002

Entwistle, London, England

Damage (with works by William Copley), Transmission Gallery, Glasgow, Scotland

1999

Glasgow Project Room, Glasgow, Scotland

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

(* indicates a publication)

2011

Space Oddity, CCA Andratx, Mallorca, Spain

2010

**BigMinis: Fetishes of Crisis*, CAPC, Museum of Contemporary Art, Bordeaux, France

Little Magazine, Studio Warehouse, Glasgow, Scotland

Project Room, Glasgow, Scotland

Real Estate, Zero, Milan, Italy

Galerie Micky Schubert, Berlin, Germany

2009

**Newspeak: British Art Now*, The Saatchi Collection / The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia

Depression, Marres Centre for Contemporary Culture, Maastricht, The Netherlands

Why Painting Now?, Blondeau Fine Art Services, Geneva, Switzerland

The Associates, Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, Scotland

White Wallet, Gaudel de Stampa, Paris, France

2008

"*To bring forth and give*" *Sorcha Dallas Artist's Print Project*, Glasgow Print Studio, Glasgow, Scotland

It's a British Sound, Schurmann Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Legend, Domain de Chamarande, Paris, France

2007

Drawing 2007, The Drawing Room, London, England

Triumph of Painting, Saatchi Gallery, London, England

Stuff: International Contemporary Art from the Collection of Burt Aaron, Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit, MI

Hotel at Galerie Guido W. Baudach, Berlin, Germany

2006

Faces, Blondeau Fine Art Services, Geneva, Switzerland

The Tate Triennial 2006, New British Art, Tate Britain, London, England

The Figs Play Fox Dead, David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

If it didn't Exist you'd Have to Invent it: a Partial Showroom History, The Showroom, London, England

2005

Jaybird, Galleria Zero, Milan, Italy

2004

The Fee of Angels, Man in the Holocene, London, England

Eye of The Needle, Roberts & Tilton Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

Year Zero, Northern Gallery of Contemporary Art, Sunderland, England

Trailer, Man in the Holocene, London, England

Souvenir, Hotel, London, England

Gertcha, Michael Wilkinson's, Glasgow, Scotland

Synth, Kunstraum b/2, Leipzig, Germany

Haute Street, Galerie Diana Stigter, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2003

The Moment of Fiction, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, Dundee, Scotland

Put out more Flags (curated by Christabel Stewart), Sutton Lane, London, England

This has reached the limit conditions of its own rhetoric, with Joanne Tatham and Tom O'Sullivan, The Modern Institute, Glasgow, Scotland

Minerals In The Water, Dirk Bell, Kate Davis and Alan Michael, The Changing Room, Stirling, Scotland

2002

Hero, St. Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow, Scotland

Alan Michael, Vangelis Vlahos, Els Hanappe Underground, Athens, Greece

Jean-Luc Blanc, Alan Michael, Galerie Giti Nourbakhsh, Berlin, Germany

Gwang Ju Biennial with Transmission Gallery, Gwang Ju, South Korea

Half the World Away, Halls Walls CCA, Buffalo, NY

2001

Stray Show, Seventreesplit, Chicago, IL

Here And Now: Scottish Art 1990-2001, Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, Scotland

Antarctica, Entwistle, London, England

Angel Dust, Intermedia, Glasgow Record Collection, VTO Gallery, London and Forde Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland

Glasgow Art Fair 2001 with Charisma/-DBF and Transmission Gallery, Glasgow, Scotland

Brown Field, curated by Rob Tufnell, Market, Glasgow, Scotland

British Mythic, cover artwork for contemporary culture publication

2000

Panache, Keith Farquhar, Lucy McKenzie and Alan Michael, Els Hanappe Underground, Athens, Greece

Red Marauder, Tramway, Glasgow, Scotland

John I'm Only Dancing, Collective Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland

Die Gefahr Im Jazz, Deutsch Britische Freundschaft, Berlin, Germany

Focus on the Fear, On Destruction, Power, Death, Venetia Kapernekas Fine Art Inc., New York, NY

Sweet Dreams, Exedra, Hilversum, The Netherlands

1999

Misty In Roots, curated by Alex Frost and Alan Michael, including Duncan Campbell, Lorin Davies, Howard Fried, Ewan Imrie, Lucy McKenzie, Fly Gallery, Glasgow, Scotland

Museum Magogo, Glasgow Project Room and PB Gallery, Melbourne, Australia

Accelerated Learning, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, Dundee, Scotland

The Black Diamond no.1, Artist's pages published during the *Liverpool Biennial White Bear ZZ*, with Scott Myles, Hayley Tompkins, Sue Tompkins, 78 Roslea Drive, Glasgow, Scotland

You Are Very Important, with Alex Frost, Collective Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland

Shake The Disease, curated by Lucy McKenzie, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, Dundee, Scotland

Horsriding, Painting and Lovemaking, Deutsch Britische Freundschaft, London, England

1998

Mountain Madness, Glasgow Project Room, Glasgow, Scotland

Slipstream, curated by Francis McKee and Toby Webster, Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow, Scotland

Fan of Exaggeration, La Cie La Compagnie, Marseilles, France

Family Credit, Collective Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland

Add Night to Night, The Showroom, London, England

Crystal State part of 'Artranspennine 98, Three Month Gallery, Liverpool and Longsight, Benefit Office, Manchester, England

Toga, Assembly Gallery, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, Scotland

1997

Olympic Village, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow, Scotland

Tutor With An Idea, Three Month Gallery, Liverpool, England

Suburban Affair, Newport-on-Tay, Fife, Scotland

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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2011

**Alan Michael*, edited by Ariella Yedgar, texts by Dominic Eichler and Lucy McKenzie. London: David Kordansky Gallery and HOTEL, 2010

Eichler, Dominic, "I'm In: Dominic Eichler on Alan Michael's work," *MousseMagazine.it*, 2011

2010

Phillips, Brad, "Interview," *Hunter and Cook*, Issue 7, 2010, pp. 2-7

Roelstraete, Dieter, "Modernism, Postmodernism and Gleam: On the Photorealist Work Ethic," *Afterall*, Issue 24, 2010, p. 5

"The Mother and the Whore," *Foxtrot Echo Lima Tango*, June 2010, p. 22

*Ellis, Patricia, ed., *Newspeak: British Art Now*, Saatchi Gallery. London: Booth-Clibborn Editions, May 2010, pp. 193-194

2009

Vishmidt, Marina, "I'm too sad to sell you," *textezurkunst.de*, December 3, 2009

Garner, James, "Review," *The Metro*, April 14, 2009

Cooper, Neil, "Review," *The List*, April 2, 2009

Allsop, Laura, "Review," *Art Review*, March 2009

Shannon, Liz, "Review," *The List*, January 8, 2009

2008

Mansfield, Susan, "Emerging Talent To Get Excited About," *The Scotsman*, December 26, 2008

Garner, James, "Review," *Metro Life*, December 15, 2008

Mottram, Jack, "When Exhibitions Hang Together," *The Herald*, December 12, 2008

Douglas, Sarah, "Alan Michael & Stephen Sutcliffe: Ritual in The Dark," *ArtReview.com*, May 30, 2008

Peter, Mick, "Alan Michael," *Frieze*, Issue 115, May 2008, p. 176

Gallwey, Lucy, "Alan Michael," *The Skinny*, March 6, 2008

"Snapshot," *a-n Magazine*, February 2008

Lesso, Rosie, "Split Personality," *The List*, January 31, 2008

Mansfield, Susan, "Brushes with Reality," *The Scotsman*, January 26, 2008

Pollock, David, "Touch Void," *The List*, January 17, 2008

McDermott, Leon, "Review," *The Metro*, January 2008

Cowcher, Kate, "Review," *The Map 15*, 2008

2007

Brooks, Amra, "Must See Art," *LA Weekly*, April 4, 2007

2005

Mottram, Jack, *The List*, October 20, 2005

Lewisohn, Ceder, "Alan Michael," *Map*, Issue 4, Winter 2005, p. 64

Herbert, Martin, "The Fee of Angels," *Time Out London*, January 12-19, 2005, p. 58

2004

Morton, Tom, "Alan Michael," *Frieze*, Issue 84, Summer 2004, pp. 96-99

2003

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Lowndes, Sarah, "Dirk Bell, Kate Davis and Alan Michael," *Frieze*, Issue 74, April 2003, pp. 88-89

Tufnell, Rob, "Made In Scotland," *Tema Celeste*, January/February 2003, pp. 51-53

2001

Lowndes, Sarah, "Brownfield," *Untitled*, Summer 2001, p. 32

Falconer, Morgan, "Antarctica," *What's On London*, July 18-25 2001, p. 24

Gazzola, Alex, "Antarctica at Entwistle," *Lam Magazine*, July 9, 2001, p. 28

Ratnam, Niru, "If You're Feeling Sinister," *The Face*, July 2001, p. 153

2000

Mahoney, Elisabeth, "Red Marauder," *The Guardian*, October 9, 2000, p. 21

1999

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1998

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Findlay, Judith, "Suburban Affair," *Flash Art*, January/February 1998, p. 66