

WHEN I FELT LIKE I COULD SING THAT, THEN I FELT LIKE I WAS IN  
TONY LEWIS

*“...I liked to go out with Dizzy because I used to get thrilled listening to them when he did his bebop. That’s actually the way I feel I learned what you call bop. It was quite an experience, and he used to always tell me, ‘Come on up and do it with the fellas.’ That was my education in learning how to really bop. We used to do OoBop-Sh’Bam-a-Klook-a-Mop.’ That’s one of the first things I remember he used to do... and that fascinated me. When I felt like I could sing that, then I felt like I was in.” - Ella Fitzgerald*

Massimo De Carlo London is pleased to present *When I Felt Like I Could Sing That, Then I Felt Like I Was In*, an exhibition by Tony Lewis that will present a new body of work, shown for the first time.

Tony Lewis’s practice focuses on the relationship between semiotics and language: graphite pencil and paper are the mediums the artist uses to trace and create abstract narratives and reflections on the notion of the gestural. *When I Felt Like I Could Sing That, Then I Felt Like I Was In* embodies the artists’ research for pure abstraction: tracing the conclusion of a research process that started in his earlier series of drawings titled *Gregg Shorthand*.

This new body of work, where graphite and coloured pencils generate impulsive and rhythmic shapes on paper, is intended by Lewis as a further exploration of the *Gregg Shorthand system*\* and its connection to sound, speech and pulse. In this series of drawings seemingly simple abstractions conceal intricate narratives, “beginning with a phoneme gesture as the systematic foundation (of the drawing), the coloured pencil works to support, react to, and riff off of the initial rhythm put forth by linguistic sound, creating a sequence of improvisation, and a diagram of cosmic libido.”

Each drawing in the exhibition results as a take on planned yet raw abstraction. Fragments of phonetics and colour form a visual and musical composition of chatter and shapes, which merge together to offer a reflection on the convergence of sound, language and tones.

\* The Gregg Shorthand system is the most widespread form of pen stenography in the United States, invented in 1888 it works through the recording and transcription of the phonetic of words in a writing system based on elliptical figures and lines that bisect them

{ MDC }

WWW.MASSIMODECARLO.COM

## MASSIMODECARLO

### TONY LEWIS

Tony Lewis was born in 1986 in Los Angeles, and lives and works in Chicago. His solo exhibitions include: *Alms, Comity and Plunder*, Museo Marino Marini, Florence, Italy (2016); *Pressure Free Weight Power Nomenclature Movement* at the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland in Cleveland (2015); *Bindery Projects*, Saint Paul, Minnesota (2013). Tony Lewis has taken part in group shows among which: *The Revolution Will Not Be Gray*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2016); *Walls and Words*, Elridge Street Synagogue, New York (2014); LUMP Projects, organized by John Neff, Raleigh (2013); *News from Chicago and New York City*, Feibach, Minninger, Cologne (2012); *People of Color*, Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago (2012); *Ground Floor*, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago (2012). Tony Lewis has participated the 2014 edition of the Whitney Biennial at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

#### **Hard Facts:**

Massimo De Carlo, London  
55 South Audley Street  
London W1K 2QH  
From February 10<sup>th</sup> until April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
Open Tuesday to Saturday, 10:00am – 6.00pm  
Opening: Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> of February 2017, 6.00 to 8.00 pm

#### **For further information and materials:**

Press Office, Massimo De Carlo  
T. +44 (0) 2072872005 - T. +39 02 70003987  
press@massimodecarlo.com  
www.massimodecarlo.com  
Twitter: mdcgallery  
Instagram: massimodecarlogallery

{ MDC }

WWW.MASSIMODECARLO.COM