



Aki Sasamoto

Wrong Happy Hour

12/08 – 16/09 2017

It is with great pleasure that Mendes Wood DM presents the first solo exhibition by Japanese artist Aki Sasamoto in Brazil. The show springs from a performance titled *Wrong Happy Hour*. For this project, the artist has gathered drawings, installations, videos and performances. Sasamoto's practice draws on the common ground between sculpture and performance, using her body as an agent of tension between these two lines of research. Her installations arise from an examination that is not only aesthetical but also sociological.

Wrong Happy Hour was showcased for the first time in New York in 2014, following the artist's observation that the tradition of meeting up for a drink after work was a quasi-religious ritual for the city's inhabitants. From this, Sasamoto built a bar with two parallel counters, and wearing periscope glasses – that distort her vision – she interacts with bottles and objects. At a certain point, Sasamoto draws on the wall and writes the word 'Romance'. With the use of diagrams, she questions: 'How can I understand romance? I don't really know what the opposite sex or any other person different from me thinks about.'

Sasamoto's performances often deal with identity, family and social norms. She begins her research with everyday themes that surround her, such as people's habits, mathematical concepts or food items, incorporating sculpture elements that are reproduced in the installation during the performance itself, which is turned into a standalone environment after her presentations. Her practice merges subtle themes from Japanese and American cultures. She attributes her impulse towards the 'micro-handling'¹ of objects to her Japanese upbringing, and sees the American influence in her appropriation of materials found on the streets and her ability to use different media.

Aki Sasamoto (Kanagawa, 1980) lives and works in New York. Her exhibitions include: *Yield Point*, The Kitchen, New York (2017); *Shanghai Biennale 2016*; *Power Station*, Shanghai (2016); *Roppongi Crossing 2013: Out of Doubt*, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2013); *Whitney Biennial*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2010).

¹ *Detailed and precise handling of something or a situation.*