

WHITE CUBE

Bermondsey

Press Release

Damián Ortega

Play Time

White Cube Bermondsey

27 September – 12 November 2017

Preview: Tuesday 26 September

White Cube presents an exhibition of new works by Mexican artist Damián Ortega (b. 1967) in the South Galleries at Bermondsey. *Play Time* consists of large-scale installation, sculpture and two-dimensional works focusing on the themes of chance, game play and systems of knowledge – such as cosmology and genealogy.

Taking its title from French director Jacques Tati's 1967 comedy film, the exhibition brings together a new series of works which explore context as content and how, in an age of digitised information, it is still the accidents and imperfections that can hold meaning. Ortega returns to key materials such as concrete and clay to investigate the limits, possibilities and potential for disruption within them.

Time as a material structure is a prevalent theme within the exhibition and is explored in a trio of large-scale works displaying the interior of a wrist watch. The intricate sculptures, titled *Construction time*, *History of time* and *Deconstructing time* (all 2017), are typical of **Ortega's mischievous** process of transformation.

In several other sculptures, Ortega uses clay from the Mexican city of Zacatecas to create spherical forms in various material states. In *Percentual Constellation* (2017), a number of white glazed balls extend like a solar system, while in *Variable Schema* (2017), the balls are cut in half and re-joined, their forms appearing as rogue elements within a formal, organisational structure. The hand-formed sculptures display a sensorial and tactile quality, embracing the unpredictable behaviour of the ancient material.

The exhibition also displays a series of spherical and elliptical forms created from layers of paper taken from a 1975 version of Encyclopaedia Britannica. *Encyclopedic Geodes* (2017) are displayed on plinths and appear to be geological specimens which have been cut in half to reveal their compressed, interior construction. Other works include an installation titled *Reproductive Process* (2017), **which explores the genetic 'tragedy' of haemophilia within the British Royal Family.**

Alongside *Play Time* is **Ann Veronica Janssens' first** extensive solo show in the UK, which brings together new and recent installations and sculptures in **White Cube Bermondsey's North** Gallery. Additionally, a large-scale neon work by Cerith Wyn Evans is suspended from the ceiling in White Cube **Bermondsey's 9 x 9 x 9 space, following on from his recent commission** at Tate Britain.

All exhibitions will run from 27 September – 12 November 2017.

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Notes to Editors:

- Damián Ortega was born in 1967 in Mexico City and currently lives and works in Mexico City and Berlin, Germany. He has exhibited internationally including solo exhibitions at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia (2002), Kunsthalle Basel (2004), Tate Modern, London and Museu da Arte Pampulha, Belo Horizonte, Brazil (2005), The Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, The Gallery at REDCAT, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2007), Centre Pompidou, Paris (2008), Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2009), Barbican Curve Gallery, London (2010), The Freud Museum, London (2013) and the Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2014). Group exhibitions include the 50th Venice Biennale (2003), 'Made in Mexico', Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2003) and the São Paulo Biennial (2006).
- Admission to White Cube is free. White Cube Bermondsey is open Tuesday–Saturday 10am–6pm and Sunday 12– 6pm. Address: 144-152 Bermondsey St, London SE1 3TQ, United Kingdom +44 (0)20 7930 5373. Website: whitecube.com
- **White Cube's** exhibition programme extends across its three gallery spaces: **Bermondsey in South London, Mason's Yard in St. James's, London and Hong Kong** Central district. Since its inception in 1993, the gallery has exhibited the work of **many of the world's most highly acclaimed** contemporary artists.
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