

Michael Dean: Analogue LOL , Will be closed on Apr. 5 (Qing Ming) and from Apr. 8 to 10, 2018 (Outing)

Solo Exhibition ShanghART, Shanghai

Date: 03.24, 2018 - 05.13, 2018

Artists: Michael Dean 迈克尔·迪恩

Analogue LOL

Artist: Michael Dean

Curator: Victor Wang

Opening: 4 pm, 24 March, 2018

Duration: 24 March – 13 May 2018

Location: ShanghART Gallery, Westbund, 2555-10 Longteng Avenue, Xuhui District, Shanghai

www.shanghartgallery.com

ShanghART Shanghai is pleased to present British artist Michael Dean's first solo exhibition in China on 24 March. The exhibition, stamped with the character and concrete syntax of public spaces, takes as its starting point the recent proliferation and prominence of pictorial language and the text-based communication of emotion via our digital devices, and explores how the ambiguity of these has enabled them to take on a range of culturally specific meanings and spaces beyond their intended use. The exhibition 'Analogue LOL', developed through a year long discussion between curator Victor Wang and artist Michael Dean, is centred on the construction of common spaces and the evolution of the acronym LOL (laughing out loud), and its recent development into the emoji officially known as 'Face with Tears of Joy'. Somewhere between picture and word, in 2015 this emoticon became the first pictograph to be named 'word of the year' by Oxford Dictionaries, signalling a shift in the application, use and reception of language. This exhibition continues to 13 May.

The layout of the exhibition begins with a single page: blank, with slightly curved edges, its flat white face becoming the unmarked vinyl floor of the ShanghART gallery, and Dean's re-appropriated security tape regulating the assembly of LOLs occupying the gallery. Dean's work is often described as sculpture, but it is not sculpture in a traditional sense. Dean traces the restlessness of inner-city living and the human emotions that spring from its cracked concrete surfaces. Each of Dean's artworks and exhibitions, including this one, begins with words and letters that he has written. However, these words and emotions have shed their skin, distorted by misuse and rearrangement, much like the posture of a minimum-wage employee moulded by the unrestrained hands of the city. Transformed from ink and lead, these charged artworks are cast and moulded from the same construction materials that

were used to redevelop Shanghai's West Bund, and that connect the joints of the city, and its public spaces to its hosts.

With its torn pages and hand mixed hand placed coloured concrete, the exhibition opens up a space between language, social space and the pictorial transformation of both, using the architecture of LOL and the visual field of construction to amass an unregulated gathering of speech and laughter which both intrudes on and slows down the rapid governance of language and space. Image-based emotions in the twenty-first century provide the foundation for an international written and visual mode of expression that has inevitably complicated the divide between visual images and verbal language.

About the Artist

Michael Dean (b. 1977 Newcastle upon Tyne, now lives and works in London) starts his work with writing - which then abstracted into human-scale sculptures, using industrial and daily materials such as concrete, steel, padlocks, papers. Dean explores the three-dimensional possibilities of language by 'spelling out' his words through the alphabet of concrete sculptures, the contagion of stickers, dyed books, casts of his and his families' fists and fingers. Dean's practice is not about presenting readable words, but rather about a disclosure of the personal, striking something in equality between the author and the viewer while placing the people in front of the work. Dean will have a solo exhibition at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art (Newcastle, UK) in 2018 and a solo exhibition at the Museo Tamayo (Mexico City, Mexico) in 2019.

Recent exhibitions include: Skulptur Projekte, Münster (2017); More Than Just Words [On the Poetic], Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna (2017); Turner Prize 2016, Tate Britain, London (2016); Sic Glyphs, South London Gallery, London (2016); Lost True Leaves, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas (2016); Qualities of Violence, De Appel Arts Centre, Amsterdam (2015); Mirrorcity (curated by Stephanie Rosenthal), Hayward Gallery, London (2014); Thousand Doors (curated by Iwona Blazwick), Whitechapel at The Gennadius Library, Athens (2014); The Introduction of the Muscle, Arnolfini, Bristol (2013); Government, Henry Moore Institute, Leeds (2012); Acts of Grass, Serpentine Gallery Pavilion, London (2011) ; A Dying Artist, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2011).

About the curator

Victor Wang is a curator and researcher based between Shanghai and London. Wang holds an MA in Curating Contemporary Art from the Royal College of Art, London. Since 2011 Wang's curatorial practice has focused on ideas of transnationalism in Asia and the Global South. Wang has written for art periodicals such as Artforum, Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art, and was a Guest Editor of LEAP Magazine. Recent exhibitions include: Katja Novitskova: Loki's Castle, Cc Foundation, Shanghai (2017); Neil Beloufa: Soft(a)ware, the chi k11 art museum, Shanghai (2016); Jac Leirner: Borders Are Drawn By Hand, Museum of

Contemporary Art (Pavilion), Shanghai (2016). Wang has worked on curatorial teams for the Twelfth Havana Biennial (2015) and the Vancouver Pavilion at the 9th Shanghai Biennale (2012). In 2016 he was awarded the International Association of Art Critics (AIICA) Incentive Prize for Young Critics. Wang has been selected as curator of the 11th edition of David Roberts Art Foundation 'Curator's Series', London, and Curator for the 'Insights' exhibition at the fifth edition of PHOTOFAIRS Shanghai 2018.