

WHITE CUBE

Bermondsey

Eddie Peake

Concrete Pitch

7 February – 8 April 2018

'There's often a sort of quest for identity in my work – and that, I think, is the staggeringly beautiful thing about being an artist. You are afforded the luxury of creating a space for yourself as an individual in the world.'

White Cube is pleased to present 'Concrete Pitch' by Eddie Peake at Bermondsey. This exhibition, Peake's fourth with the gallery, includes new sculpture, painting, sound work and performance presented in an immersive and constructed environment.

The works in this exhibition weave autobiographical elements and an examination of self-identity with more general themes of desire, the body, architecture and urban landscape. The title 'Concrete Pitch' was inspired by the bare, concrete recreation ground in Finsbury Park in London where Peake grew up, which was used as a playground, a sports field, a meeting place for people of every age, class and ethnicity and location for encounters and scenarios of all kinds. Peake has said: 'I used to treat things I did like graffiti and football and dance classes as not part of my art, then I had a sort of epiphany. I realised I want all those parts of my life in my art, and vice versa.' For Peake, whose work can be located within a history of painting and object-making as well as more recent narratives of dance and performance art, the gallery can also be considered a stage; a place to orchestrate dramas of the everyday and to present the rich associative portrait of his childhood neighbourhood as a microcosm of urban, multicultural society.

Peake will be present in the gallery space throughout the exhibition, following a scheduled daily routine. Moving between various constructed spaces which include a private office and a triangular cell-like structure, accessible only by a tall ladder, the artist 'plays' himself, both offering up and dismantling the narrative of artistic ego, fictional protagonist and 'real' self. In another specially constructed room, visible behind a window, DJs from Kool London broadcast an online radio show during the exhibition. Broadcasting oldskool jungle and drum and bass from East London tower blocks since 1991, Kool FM is one of the longest running underground stations and provided the soundtrack to Peake's adolescence.

The new, large-scale sound installation, *Stroud Green Road* runs through the gallery, consisting of a row of steel tables placed in a snaking line, just as the street of the same name runs through Peake's neighbourhood. On their tray-like surfaces is an array of objects: small-scale sculptures as well as an eclectic selection of items purchased from shops on Stroud Green Road and several small speakers which emit a low, deep register like a wavering vibration or rattle. Composed by the artist using distorted samples and field recordings from the local area, this abstract soundscape creates a continuously looping hum, while a soft pink light floods the exhibition space. Continuing the theme of revealing and concealing, an airy white curtain hangs full-length from the ceiling, creating a natural spiralling passageway, in the centre of which a split-screen projection shows four dancers, each locked in an individual, looping sequence of complex, choreographed movement. The notion of the loop, a key motif within Peake's work, is manifested in these repetitive movements, in the daily

rituals the artist will be observing, in the sonic structure of the sound sculpture and in the music played by the Kool DJs. For Peake, these devices echo the entrapping loops of thought or behaviour associated with compulsion, obsession and depression.

In several new series of paintings, techniques of layering and masking are used to create vivid abstract compositions on canvas or hard, reflective stainless-steel panels. In one group, overlapping, spray-painted rectangles recall the urban patchwork of fly-posters, while in others, graffiti-like mark-making recedes into a bright void. This exploration of the void, whereby elements of the composition are left blank or undone creates works that reflect back to the viewer a sense ennui, even depression. In another group of oil on canvas works, a rainbow-coloured text defines the form of a head in profile spelling out the enigmatic slogans 'A More Uncomfortable And Realistic History', and 'We To The Ramp Go For Relinquish Unearned Privileges And Powers'. Suggesting the direct, angry tone of graffiti, social media and urban music, these works are an expression of ideas that have formerly been implicit in Peake's work.

Born in London in 1981, Eddie Peake has lived in Jerusalem, Rome and London. Having graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art in 2006, he undertook a residency at the British School at Rome from 2008 to 2009, and in 2013 graduated with a Master's degree from the Royal Academy Schools, London. Performances include The Tanks, Tate Modern, London, Chisenhale Gallery, London, The Royal Academy of Arts, London and Cell Project Space (2012); Performa 13, New York (2013); the ICA, London (2014); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2015); Eastside Projects, Birmingham and Deitch Projects, New York (2016); La Casa Encendida, Madrid, Volcano Extravaganza, Naples and Stromboli and White Cube Bermondsey (2017). International solo exhibitions include Southard Reid, London (2012) (with Prem Sahib); Focal Point Gallery, Southend, White Cube Sao Paulo, Galleria Lorcan O'Neill, Rome and White Cube London (2013); Peres Projects Berlin (2014); Galleria Lorcan O'Neill, Rome (2015) and Barbican, London (2015).

White Cube Bermondsey is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am – 6pm and Sunday, 12 – 6pm. Admission is free.

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#concretetpitch