

Ian Law

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Opening: June 10, 18 - 22 h

June 10 - July 30, 2011

Tuesday - Saturday, 12 - 18 h

Heidestrasse 50, 10557 Berlin

Galeria Plan B is happy to present the first exhibition in Germany of the British artist Ian Law. We are pleased to invite you to the opening of the exhibition on Friday, June 10.

Through variations in its position—resting, being moved, set down, picked up—this thing is not as definite as an 'object' is (something external to the thinking mind), and is rather a *becoming*-object or quasi-object, an object with agency.

This quasi-object is produced both passively and assertively, and asks for a similar multivalent disposition from the viewer. Similar to the thing that functions as a 'ball' in the pre-modern ball-game, our quasi-object co-facilitates the production of its meaning with a society of players, by making its material available to the molding that takes place during the game. The game is formed as the material for the ball takes on the attributes of what we now refer to as a ball. Once socially acquainted, its resting place is not set, in that its body has become contingent on the various threads that show its relationships to its society.

The process of encoding is specific to subject/quasi-object relationships, but a multiplicity of these are possible and probable simultaneously. Such pluralities find in the quasi-object the nexus around which a 'society' as such is formed.

But, increasingly, codes used to refer to the quasi-object can seem consistent within its society. Referential syntaxes may become 'given,' functionalities may become 'local'.

This thing, set in a society of associations—the various infrastructures which inform its position and rendering—can easily congeal and harden, leaving the subject no longer beside or parallel to the thing but in front of an object, finite and non-negotiable, flattened out and (supposedly) totally seen. The *quasi*-object becomes impossible, and the object reigns.

Is movement towards an *un-creating*, or *de-forming* of the object's implied social renderings possible? This needn't be a violent process of defacing, but one in which a face of the thing is re-researched for – a kind of excavation process.

This work of un-creation or reversal of creation is facilitated in the gallery as a treatment, for instance, as a treatment of the gallery's existing architecture. The support structure, wall, trestle, etc., are supplied to the quasi-object, their relationship being negotiated, as a kind of meeting.

There is a tendency in Ian's work for 'human' or accidental processes coming to form something of a non-specialized practice (he may very well not arrive with a paint brush). This practice is one of investing surfaces with a supply of treatments, rather than just one. The relationship with a material is not as careless as the accident might imply – this investment of positioning and repositioning, forming and reforming the same material. (The playing of the modern game being disassembled, de-stratified, and broken up, in order to go through backwards into the de-codified pre-modern.)

Paper, with its image-like surfaces, has been put into the wash and is re-flattened and reframed by the exhibition's constituent parts. Images, or 'texts' in general (in the broadest sense of the word) suggest a position to the viewer; to read orients a subject spatially.

The objects in this show, like paintings set as horizontally on trestles, orient a viewer towards other works, to other things, to other built environments. But the works are not provisional; they are a means to an end as their end (they are this deferred end in themselves).

The work is happening on the same level as the clothing you're wearing, in that the clothing you're wearing has most likely gone through some similar processes as the work. The washed paper is not forthcoming about its origins; it might play at being representational, and its form is understood and unfolded through the other elements in the exhibition.

The work is charted by the exhibition in the society of others, each part of the show pointing towards or suggesting the gamete of an other – but this is not explicit, these pieces are not signs, and the associations function as metaphors might, one icon pointing to another, a deferral to a deferral, not at some 'truth'. A frost blanket draws open the parameters of this network, attaching it to other shows where other parts of this same material are located.

The angles of viewer-ship and the positions of the body of the viewing or author, considerations local to the photographer, function here as considerations of the exhibition viewer, and specifically the way in which surfaces co-orient a viewer to their view. The view is not a sum of the work, a disclosure of parameters, or a perspective that might allow for the exhibition to

become a survey-like image - the view is rather the *induced* image.

In the death of the seed, death constitutes the dismemberment of the somatic, whence a re-assessment of the semantic is required. The work may no longer exist, while the form may remain. The chaff of the seed persists, but the thing we referred to as a seed, is no longer there. There is a transferal of our attention, from the properties of the seed to the properties of the chaff. This transferal is slow, never ending. The decreation process is not one which destroys what is removed, but goes from a plurality of views, to a view which sees the aggregate as un-defined, and nebulous, making a mist or lens of the encoded social world, through which some thing, surface or material can be seen.

Can we think of the artist as a co-worker together with the materials he works with – so as to make for a non-conceptual positioning for the artist, one where there is a formal negotiation together with conceptual apparatuses? The installation shows a point at which Ian puts the ball down, to rest.\*

\*This text is composed of excerpts from 'A Rewriting of Decreation' (2011), by Zayne Armstrong, written to coincide with Ian Law's exhibition 'Add a description'.

Ian Law (born 1984, lives and works in London) graduated 2009 from the The Royal College of Art. His works were part of the group exhibition *Session\_3\_Image* at Am Nuden Da, London in 2009 and *History of Art, the* (curated by Mihnea Mircan) at David Roberts Art Foundation in 2010. Currently his work is on view in the group exhibition *Young London* at V22 Workspace, from June 1 to July 30.

For further information please contact the gallery at +49.172.3210711 or [contact@plan-b.ro](mailto:contact@plan-b.ro).