

Deadpan Exchange VIII: Mexico City

Organized by Heidi Hove (DK) and Jonn Herschend (US), curated by Victoria Lucas (UK)

Casa Maaud, Altamirano 20, Colonia San Rafael Delegación Cuauhtemoc, CP.06470 México DF

Featuring the work of Charles Quick (UK), David Mackintosh (UK), Lesley Guy (UK), Mat Gregory (UK) and Karin Bergström (SE), Michael Day (UK), Simon Le Ruez (UK) and Victoria Lucas (UK).

Press and Artist Preview: Thursday March 20, 2014 at 6pm

Open for the Public: Thursday March 20, 2014 at 8pm

Opening Night Performance, Förstå [Understand] by Karin Bergström & Mat Gregory

Deadpan Exchange Presentation and Video Screening: Saturday March 22, 2014 at 12pm

Finissage and Presentation of the Mexican based Artists, Saturday, April 5 at 8pm

Exhibition Opening Hours: Open by appointment only

The work presented by the eight UK based artists is the eight part series of international deadpan exchanges, which began in Denmark and Berlin in the summer of 2007. In each of the shows, the artists are actively involved in a give-and-take of deadpan communication... a sort of classic comedy exchange. The work exhibited at the Casa Maaud by the seven UK artists/groups is a reaction to the work of the seven Lithuanian based artists, who exhibited at Hanover Project in Preston (UK) for Deadpan Exchange VII in November 2012.

Deadpan is a form of comic delivery in which humor is presented without a change in emotion or facial expression, usually speaking in a monotonous manner. This puts the burden of interpretation on the viewer. Is the scene comedy or tragedy?

From an art historical standpoint, the shows take their cue from the deadpan strategies employed by artists in the early 1970's throughout much of the world: Yoko Ono, Martha Rosler, Bas Jan Ader and Vito Acconci... to name a few. Their works were a formal rejection of the institutions, the world of "Modern Art," in favor of a more democratic interaction with the work. In many cases, the work, which often boarded on the absurd or tragic, was delivered with a complete straight face, forcing the viewer to decide how they felt about the work.

The Deadpan Exchange Series is probing this ground in a global way. What happens if you start a joke in one country and respond to it in another? Is there an international deadpan language? Is deadpan universal? From a political standpoint, the organizers are concerned with the way the world is becoming increasingly black and white without any room for something gray and muddled. It is important to offer work that actively challenges the viewer to interpret the work for him or herself. And the Deadpan aesthetic offers a way to both engage and challenge the viewer at the same time. The organizers are also interested in bringing a diverse group of artists together from different places throughout the world and starting a dialogue that might not take place outside of formal institutions.

At the end of Deadpan Exchange VIII, seven Mexican artists will create reactions to the works of the seven English artists, and these reactions will be exhibited in another country (the location of which is still being determined). In the end, we intend to have a final exhibition back in Copenhagen with all the artists' works in near future.

For more information, please contact:

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Deadpan Exchange VIII is proudly supported by:

