



DAVID BEN WHITE

Outside Inside

Opening: 12/05/2016, 6 pm

Exhibition: 13/05/2016 – 25/06/2016

Press release

As visitors, we are used to art galleries operating as self-enclosed worlds. The surrounding whiteness, the bright lighting and the architectural design fuse together. We are immersed in a dreamlike space and what is seen becomes fetishized by its constructed isolation. Within the space of the Kerstin Engholm gallery, *Outside Inside* renegotiates this experience. The exhibition centres on a series of paintings of modernist, domestic interiors, set outside and inside and framed by surrounding sheet glass windows. Applied to the walls are vertical and horizontal strips of coloured vinyl that replicate the partial framing of the paintings. The homogenous interior design of the white cube, a continuing legacy of modernist ideology, seduces by isolating the art exhibited. In contrast, the installation for *Outside Inside* expands the paintings out onto the gallery wall and the viewers' spatial relationship. Playfully setting out to inter-connect between both worlds: private space becoming public and the viewer becoming voyeur.

For the modernist architect, the development of sheet glass windows offered a revolutionary way to undermine notions of domestic privacy. Operating mainly as a horizontal framing device to its surrounding location, the sheet glass window, a recurring ingredient within early domestic designs, placed its occupant within a new, interior/exterior matrix. The plate glass window offered its inhabitants a new way of living, but it also reflected the controlling ego of its modernist designers and offered its occupants a modernist vision of omnipotent power.

In the second space of the gallery, the artist confronts the reduction of the female to sensual, fetishized objects, which is a recurring problematic of modernism and a central theme in the first exhibition space, with a portrait series entitled 'Personification of an Ideal.' These paintings are based on significant women modernists who were ignored by the galleries, museums and institutions that exhibited their fellow male artists. Artists like Eileen Grey, Sonia Delaunay, Margarete Schutte-Lihotzky, Ise Gropius, Lilly Reich, Gunta Stolzl and many, many more created extraordinary bodies of work. How was it possible that their significance was overlooked or forgotten until only recently?

David Ben White (*1965 London, Great Britain) lives and works in London. From 2003 to 2006 he studied at the Central Saint Martins College of Art and from 2010 to 2011 at the Chelsea College of Art in London. His works are shown in numerous international solo and group exhibitions.

Solo Shows (selection): 2015 L'étrangère project space, St. Paul de Vence; 2013 Kerstin Engholm Galerie, Vienna; 2012 University of Arts, London; 2010 And/Or Gallery, Dallas, 2008 Studio 1.1, London; 2005 Bhavan Center, London; 2003 Ben Zion Boulevard, Tel Aviv.

Group Shows (selection): 2016 Geddes Gallery, London; 2015 NUNC Contemporary Gallery, Antwerp; 2014 FOKIDOS 21, Athens; 2012 Kerstin Engholm Galerie, Vienna; 2011 ICA, London; 2010 Galerie DS, Brussels; 2009 Saxon Schwartz Gallery, London; 2004 Saatchi & Saatchi offices, London.