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***ACT & APPLICATION*   
Group Exhibition of Six International Artists**

PRIVATE PREVIEW SEPTEMBER 15th 6-9PM   
(AS PART OF ALSERKAL GALLERIES NIGHT)

EXHIBITION UNTIL 29TH OCTOBER

Lawrie Shabibi is pleased to announce *Act & Application,* a group exhibition that brings together six contemporary artists from around the world: Ra di Martino, littlewhitehead, Arthur Prior, David Rickard, Darren Harvey-Regan and Setareh Shahbazi. Curated by London based William Lunn, this exhibition offers a selection from the breadth of diverse outcomes that result from artists’ use of photography within a broader multi-media practice.

Despite the breakdown of traditional delineations, photographers and artists remain somehow linguistically separated - even if they are photographers making art. On the one hand photography can be understood as a discipline with complex protocols and traditions and on the other a tool available to all. Here photography is variously: appropriated, used as documentation and subjected to the conventions of other media. Choices regarding photographic convention are relinquished, interrogated or even willfully disregarded by the artists.

Italian Ra di Martino has established herself as an artist filmmaker, but in recent years has begun to supplement her practice with photographic work. In this exhibition we present her series depicting ruins of abandoned desert film sets in Tunisia and Morocco. Whether the material ruins of a fictional future in *No More Stars (Star Wars)* or of a replica and dislocated Mecca in her untitled Morocco series, all aspects are considered through the lens of a filmmaker with only peripheral knowledge of photographic convention. The effects are seen most noticeably in her choice of presentation. The *No More Stars*series have significant white space left beneath each print as if editors notes or subtitles for on screen dialogue might appear at any moment.

Glaswegian artist duo littlewhitehead have extended their irreverent take on art production to include photography by enlarging holiday snaps of America taken from their families archive. The amateur nature of Our Pleasure adds to the authenticity of each found image - no matter how bizarre the content nothing is staged.  Without ever lifting a camera littlewhitehead create a photographic series with its own unconventional language that evokes a certain European nostalgia with regards to American culture.

Iranian Setareh Shahbazi’s starting point for her projects is photographs: family photos, film stills, postcards, magazine clippings and more. In her series *Spectral Days* Shahbazi revisits family photos she stumbled upon from her visit to Tehran in 2009, conjuring up memories of her family’s exile from Iran following the revolution. With a healthy disregard for the sanctity of photography as a mirror of reality, she breaks down the images using digital manipulation. Blending, dissolving and over-painting the images to further decontextualize her subjects she engages our imagination in read infinite possible narratives.

Born in New Zealand but based in London, David Rickard examines our relationship to space in architectural terms. With the work *Exhaust,* he tests his respiratory requirements on a space during one 24 hour period, capturing every outbreath without sleep or rest in large foil balloons. Working in collaboration with photographer Manuel Vason, images were captured throughout the process, recording the totemic rise of 98 balloons as they accumulated. Here Rickard uses photography purely as an outsourced documentary record of a transitory performance.

British artist Arthur Prior has made several series of quasi-photographic images using his own customised scanning technology. While this unconventional approach to making images throws out many photographic compositional concerns his recent work *Various incarnations of Shirley*singles out and documents one core convention of the photographic tradition – the printers test trip. Taking the original colour test strip model ‘Shirley’ as its starting point the artist’s book charts the history of the strips and the various models who came to be known collectively as the ‘Shirleys’. When compiled as a record the effects of feminism, globalization, racial equality, political correctness and technology are drawn out, in subtle and often humorous juxtapositions.

Born in Britain, Darren Harvey-Regan studied photography but works across disciplines to subvert, question and extend the conventions of photography and its relationship to representation and the physical world. In *Mass* the simplest and most direct approach is favored in order to render the medium as transparent as possible. Presenting the image in this triptych form he draws not on photographic convention but on the tradition of icon painting. Enhanced by the title - which alludes as much to ceremony as the peculiar weight of the palm, which is its central focus, the artist manipulates representation and transports these objects into the realm of the profound.

**About William Lunn**

William Lunn (born England 1988) studied Art History at The Courtauld Institute, London (2009). Having curated his first pop-up exhibition aged 18 he continued to develop his ideas in occasional exhibitions while working in various London galleries. From 2010 he co-directed Sumarria Lunn, with a permanent gallery space in Mayfair, London from 2011 – 2013. Lunn is now curator and director at Copperfield Gallery (opened 2014) where he represents contemporary artists from around the world. Along side this he continues his work as an independent curator: forthcoming exhibitions for 2014 include *Alchemy: Chemical Transformations in Contemporary Art* at Nest, Den Haag (NL). He has sat on various panel discussions, including ‘The Art of Not Making’ at the Royal Academy Schools with Gavin Turk and Richard Wilson.

**About Lawrie Shabibi**

Lawrie Shabibi is a contemporary art gallery housed in a 3000 square foot warehouse in Dubai's Alserkal Avenue. The gallery’s programme has been to support a multi-generation of international contemporary artists mainly from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. By holding a regular programme of exhibitions, screenings and talks, publishing catalogues and participating in international art fairs, the gallery engages the wider local and international community.

The gallery represents Hamra Abbas, Wafaa Bilal, Asad Faulwell, Nadia Kaabi-Linke, Selma Gürübz, Taus Makhacheva, Nabil Nahas, Driss Ouadahi, Nathaniel Rackowe, Marwan Sahmarani, Larissa Sansour, Yasam Sasmazer, Shahpour Pouyan and Adeel uz Zafar.

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