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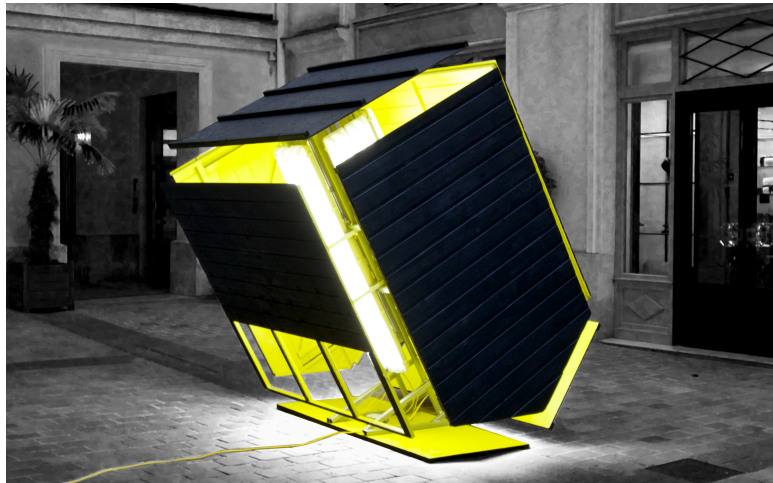
Lawrie Shabibi presents *Radiant Trajectory*

A solo exhibition by Nathaniel Rackowe

PRIVATE PREVIEW: JANUARY 12, 2015, 6-9PM

BREAKFAST TALK: JANUARY 13, 11AM

EXHIBITION CONTINUES UNTIL MARCH 7, 2015



Nathaniel Rackowe considers light to be one material in his palette as an artist, using it throughout his practice as both a surface and a point of origin. The title of the show reflects these parallel traits: 'trajectory' is a precise, mathematical term, referring to the source, direction and line that light can travel – but when prefixed by 'radiant' it takes on a more ethereal quality, the overall effect perhaps greater than the sum of its parts.

The exhibition, his debut with the gallery, brings together wall-based neon, scaffolding pieces, freestanding sculptures and Bitumen paintings which all share a fascination with the perception of light. "I see the relationship between light and structure to be so important in my work, specifically in relation to urban space." Rackowe comments. "Dubai is the epitome of a frenetic urban environment, constantly in flux".

Drawing much inspiration from his home city of London and Dubai, which he has visited periodically since 1999: the artist talks openly about the necessity of experiencing a range of environments and travelling globally. Those first few weeks when everything is alien and you view seemingly insignificant details of the urban fabric with fresh eyes: that is where creativity is born. He takes functional, familiar elements from a modern metropolis - corrugated plastics, concrete, scaffolding, wooden slats, breezeblocks and strip lights, playfully connecting them with steel bolts and bright red wires, embracing the relationship between such raw materials.

Movement and change are crucial elements in his practice, some sculptures are kinetic, others rely on factors changing around them – for example the transition between day and night, when natural light fades and is replaced by artificial lighting, when shadows build up and different elements are illuminated or hidden. He depicts light in all its guises, the full spectrum from cool to warm, mapping its effect on the urban landscape.

Rackowe's large-scale installation *Black Shed Expanded (BSE)*, 2014, is a central piece in the show. Commissioned by Le Village Royal, Paris it was first exhibited outside earlier in 2014, now seeing it inside the gallery space intensifies the contrasting materials, surfaces and colours. The everyday object has been transformed: turned on its head, pulled apart and illuminated. The deep black bitumen painted wooden slats that make up each contour of the shed sit dramatically against the fierce yellow glow on each open edge. This yellow is not, as first appears, the direct colour of the internal light source, but instead a refraction of the light coming from the internally fixed white strip bulbs against the bright yellow painted interior walls.

This refracted light effect is also evident in his new series of flattened wall based sculptures or Bitumen paintings. On the reverse of the welded steel frame he sprays acid yellow or warm red, which creates a visible glow around the works and adds to the objects three-dimensional quality. The images in this series are true compositions selected from hundreds of photographs he took of Dubai in May 2014, driving through diverse areas of the city – industrial, historic, tourist, business, retail - fascinated by the way the city has changed since his first visit fifteen years ago. Bitumen, a type of oil, is applied to honeycombed card, which gives depth and a raw edge to the works. The aspect ratio of the painting's size is always 2:1, reminiscent of a cinema screen, which gives a stretched perspective – also perhaps the view from a car window.

Nathaniel Rackowe's artworks are a fascinating amalgamation of today's metropolitan experience evoked through the vicissitudes of light. Using mass-manufactured, derivative products, he manages to create contemporary monuments of stability, permanence and beauty.

Nathaniel Rackowe Biography

Born in 1975 in the UK and currently living in London, Rackowe graduated from the Slade School of Art with an M.F.A in sculpture. Selected solo shows include *The Consequence of Light*, Bodson Gallery, Brussels, *Reflections on Space*, BISCHOFF/WEISS, London and *Shift*, BISCHOFF/WEISS, London. Recent group shows include *Lumiere*, *Light Festival of Durham*, UK (2013); *Dynamo: A century of light and movement in art, 1913-2013*, Grand Palais, Paris and *The Double Illums Bolighus*, Copenhagen. Public Art Projects include *DEN FRIE*, Centre of Contemporary Art, Copenhagen; *Spin*, Lima Peru; *RP3*, Economist Plaza with the Contemporary Arts Society, London and *LP4*, Victoria Station, London. His works are in notable public collections including CIFO (Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation), Miami; Jumex Collection, Mexico City; Museum of Modern Art, Lima; LVMH Collection, Paris; Museum of New Art, Tasmania; David Roberts Collection, London; UK Government Art Collection; Hauser & Wirth Collection, Zurich; and Ernst & Young Collection, London.

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 supports 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, Adel Abidin, Wafaa Bilal, Asad Faulwell, Nadia Kaabi-Linke, Taus Makhacheva, Nabil Nahas, Driss Ouadahi, Nathaniel Rackowe, Marwan Sahmarani, Larissa Sansour, Yasam Sasmazer, Shahpour Pouyan and Adeel uz Zafar.

Media Contact

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