

# The Kitchen

**Boru O'Brien O'Connell: *Draft, Capture, —***

January 23–March 1, 2014

Opening reception: January 23, 6–8 p.m.

For his first New York City solo exhibition, O'Brien O'Connell takes an encounter with the iconic work of industrial designer and illustrator John Vassos as a starting point. Desks, cameras, microphones and other materials for constructing and retaining take on roles as mnemonic and perceptual devices in various states of assembly and exposure. In a multi-channel video entitled *Every movement does have a background, but every background is potentially useless*, O'Brien O'Connell uses set and camera to mirror tropes such as the filmic wipe to conflate the subject and medium into a vertiginous space of heightened creative emblems. Within the video, an animation extracts characters from Vassos's 1931 book *Phobia*, an illustrated interpretation of myriad phobias related to urban life. The accompanying descriptions were florid, yet revealing in their inter-war fixations on psychoanalytical allegory.

The graphic simplicity of O'Brien O'Connell's video is complicated by non-diegetic sound and voice-overs from multiple performers. This audio conveys the artist's continued investigation of assumed narrative trust and authority within the monologue format; authorship and articulation are punctuated by irreverent confusion and translation. Alongside the video, sculptures and photographs extend the examination of sublimated fear by way of design and objects, while the initial legibility of these familiar forms and mediums is impeded by O'Brien O'Connell's representation and installation. A series of black and white photographs depict images of objects taken from a book published in 1979. These objects act as placeholders, shifting the symbolic importance of various motifs in the elementary construction of knowledge that appear throughout the exhibition.

This exhibition is curated by Lumi Tan. A concurrent solo exhibition by Luke Stettner will also be on view from January 23–March 1. Exhibition hours are Tuesday–Friday, 12–6 p.m. and Saturday, 11 a.m.–6p.m.

## About the artist

**Boru O'Brien O'Connell** is an artist based in New York. He uses video, film, photography, writing and sculpture to work within a wide range of venue and collaboration. Recent projects include an installation for *Works Sited*, a program at the Los Angeles Central Public Library curated by Olivian Cha, and a residency at EMPAC (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, NY).

Collaborative contributions include a three-channel video work and writing for Miguel Gutierrez's 2012–13 performance *And lose the name of action* which has been shown internationally at venues including BAM (NY) and the Walker Arts Center (MN). His work has been published by *Blind Spot*, *Bidoun*, and *Triple Canopy*, and written about in the *New Yorker*, the *New York Times*, *Art in America* and *Frieze*.

Boru O'Brien O'Connell's *Draft, Capture, —* is made possible with support from Jerome Foundation, Dedalus Foundation, Inc., Foundation for Contemporary Arts, and with public funds from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Additional production support and residency provided by EMPAC/Experimental Media and Performing Artist Center, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

## **About The Kitchen**

The Kitchen is one of New York City's most forward-looking nonprofit spaces, showing innovative work by emerging and established artists across disciplines. Our programs range from dance, music, performance, and theater to video, film, and art, in addition to literary events, artists' talks, and lecture series. Since its inception in 1971, The Kitchen has been a powerful force in shaping the cultural landscape of this country, and has helped launch the careers of many artists who have gone on to worldwide prominence.

The Kitchen is also supported by public funds from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; New York State Office of Emergency Management; and National Endowment for the Arts.



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