

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE
GAGOSIAN GALLERY
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KATHRYN ANDREWS | ALEX ISRAEL

Thursday, 16 January–Saturday, 15 March 2014
Opening reception: Thursday, January 16th, from 6:00 to 8:00pm

Gagosian Rome is pleased to announce a two-person exhibition of sculpture by Kathryn Andrews and Alex Israel. This is the first time that both artists have shown their work in Rome.

The readymade has emerged as an autonomous artistic medium, as persistent as painting, sculpture and photography. Andrews and Israel advance this position by insisting upon temporality and contingency as new parameters for their readymade art. Based in Los Angeles, each engages with the particular culture of the local film and media industries. Mining the "food chain" of show business, they interrogate and confound the fine line between "talent" and "raw material" while re-framing and re-presenting manufactured items whose formal and auratic properties are often overlooked. Deploying rented and/or recognizable film props and even going so far as to exhibit work by other artists and artisans as their own—Andrews' *Umbrella Stand No. 2* (2013) depicts "stock" pattern designs for sale via internet; Israel's *Sky Backdrop* (2013) is painted by a Warner Bros. scenic artist—both artists demonstrate a renewal of Duchamp's audacious undermining of the status of authorship and the art object. Whether re-positioning film props or celebrity memorabilia in a new setting of commercial engagement with a consumer audience (the art gallery), or replacing Modernism's forms with Hollywood's particular brand of self-mythologizing visual tropes and surfaces, Andrews and Israel confront established expectations of process, authorship and permanence.

The multifaceted nature of Andrews' work reflects her sensitivity to the decentralized urban sprawl of Los Angeles. Often she combines a meticulously fabricated "framing" element with a second notable object, the juxtaposition of which invites a multitude of implied narrative projections, while simultaneously de-stabilizing traditional assumptions about the formal hierarchies of sculptural pedestal, armature, and object. In *Die Another Day* (2013), a stainless steel vanity unit is the support for a single golden bullet used in the James Bond film of the same title, while reflecting the viewer in its frame.

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Israel similarly engaged Los Angeles in a recent series of video portraits of notable locals, *As It Lays* (2011–12). In this bizarre spin on TV talk shows, Israel quizzed celebrities including Marilyn Manson, Christina Ricci, and Melanie Griffith on favorite colors, salad dressings, and ice cream flavors, generating spontaneous, unexpected interactions. In *Property* (2010–), a related body of work, the role of the performer is occupied by the rented cinema prop, which is selected by the artist to play the part of readymade sculpture.

While approaching sculpture from different material and aesthetic standpoints, both Andrews and Israel repeatedly identify objects that allude to, or overlap with, historic sculptural gestures. Every work or component has its own history. Some are spectacular and self-evident—Andrews' golden bullet has evolved from purposeful object to film prop to artwork, and Israel's *Maltese Falcon* (2013) appropriates the form and allure of the inanimate star of the 1941 film—while others are banal or opaque. Engaging a sculptural legacy that proposes the proximity between art and everyday life, Andrews and Israel draw on historic precedents from Jasper Johns' cast readymades to Haim Steinbach's shelf arrangements of common objects, expanding upon the genre by demonstrating the shared nuances between objects of dramatically varying status.

Kathryn Andrews was born in Mobile, Alabama in 1973. Selected recent exhibitions include "George Herms: Xenophilia (Love of the Unknown)," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2011); "Modify, As Needed," Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami (2011); "American Exuberance," Rubell Family Collection, Miami (2011); "Made in L.A. 2012," Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2012); and "When Attitudes Became Form Become Attitudes," Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (2013). A major survey of her work, "Special Meat Occasional Drink," was presented at Museum Ludwig, Cologne in 2013.

Alex Israel was born in Los Angeles in 1982. Public collections include Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles and Moderna Museet, Stockholm. Recent solo exhibitions include Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Salt Lake City (2012); Museo Civico Diocesano di Santa Maria dei Servi, Città della Pieve, Italy (2012); LAXART, Los Angeles (2013); and Le Consortium, Dijon, France (2013).

Both Andrews and Israel live and work in Los Angeles.

For further inquiries please contact the gallery at +39.06.4208.6498 or at roma@gagosian.com. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

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