Press Release

National Gallery 2: Empire
Yuji Agematsu / Gabriele Beveridge / Dora Budor / Nicholas Cheveldave / Bryan Dooley /
Vincent Fecteau / Mathis Gasser / Lena Henke / Veit Laurent Kurz / Sam Lewitt /Danny McDonald /
Stuart Middleton / Jill Mulleady / Andrew Norman Wilson /Chadwick Rantanen / Magali Reus
26 September 2015 – 08 January, 2016
Private view: 24 September, 6-9 pm

--

In the exhibition *National Gallery* at Grand Century, New York [2014] artists were invited to include works that would fit into or sit upon the drop ceiling of the gallery. Some works were made to replace existing panels, others were placed on top of transparent acrylic replacement tiles within the ceiling cavity. These could be viewed from below or on ladders.

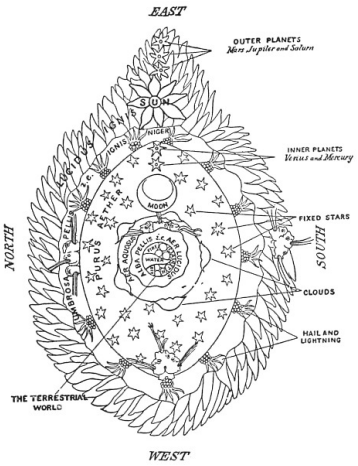
For *National Gallery 2: Empire* the existing suspended ceiling of CHEWDAY'S London space will be dropped to 130 cm. Each participating artist has been invited to submit a work that fits within standard ceiling tile dimensions (2ft x 2ft / 2ft x 4ft) or that otherwise involves the ceiling structure. Works will either fit within the ceiling frame, or be installed upon plasterboard / transparent acrylic tiles.. Visitors are required to crouch to enter the exhibition and find spaces where panels have been removed to stand up and view the works. This will force a close-up perspective of viewing, where inside and outside, the micro and macro becomes problematized – a dynamic commonly encountered with architectural models.

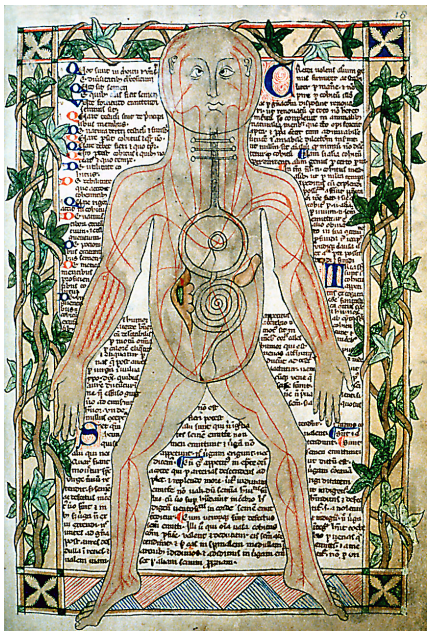
Models have often been used as devices for prospective planning, as a device for design, for play, for projecting obsessions, for planning bank heists and devising military strategies. The dynamic between the viewer and the architectural model is traditionally one of power. As art galleries increasingly become spaces where architecture is imposing power over the viewer, this perspective shifts the dynamic back to the viewer but at the same time immerses them within the architecture of the gallery space. The viewer will experience an oscillation between the cowering position of the oppressed and the overview perspective of the oppressor.

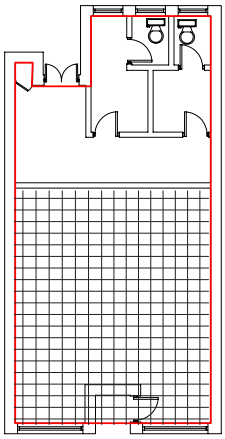
This inside / outside problematic could be seen to relate to the logic of everyday experience in neo-liberal, post-fordist capitalism where we are never sure whether we are inside or outside of the game. The moments that we think we are on a break from work are actually often the moments that systems of labour challenge us to be the most productive. The moments we intend to take a critical stance from the outside are often the moments when we are most implicated. In institutional critique where we have moved from a traditional understanding of the institution as specific places, organizations and individuals to a conception now of it as a social field, the question of what is inside and what is outside has become more ambiguous.

Many of the works reference architecture or are architectural models in themselves. Others follow in a lineage of the readymade, functioning as totems of cultural detritus, their absurdity writ monumental.

Overall the exhibition will constitute an Empire, a cityscape, an elysian field - a world of worlds that comprises the macrocosm – the universe as a whole - and the microcosm – the body as a 'little world' - an epitome of the universe as a whole.







GROUND FLOOR LEVEL

CLIENT	LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH
ADDRESS	139 LAMBETH WALK SE11
FLOOR AREA	61.11SQ.M
SCALE	1/100
DATE	01/02/2007