

Keitelman Gallery

GAL WEINSTEIN

RUST AND FIRE

06.06 – 19.07.2014

OPENING (6-9PM) THURSDAY 05.06.2014

TUESDAY - SATURDAY 12 TO 6PM

CONTACT: VALÉRIE PALACIOS – KEITELMAN +32 477 77 53 61

As the final of the gallery year, before the summer break, the Keitelman Gallery is proud to present a new exhibition of work by Israeli artist Gal Weinstein. Weinstein's reputation is growing both in Europe and the rest of the world, largely thanks to recent and forthcoming exhibitions in such prestigious venues as the Museum of Contemporary art of Rome (MACRO) and the 4th Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art, as well as Basel's Kunsthaus Baselland.

Gal Weinstein, born in 1970, has developed a body of work that includes drawing, sculpture and video that has led him to do some intriguing and resonant technical research. Rather than creating images in traditional media such as oil paint, gouache or paper collage, Weinstein works with unusual materials like wool and glass, polyester fibres, expanded polystyrene and even coffee.

In true virtuoso fashion, he uses these materials to create astonishingly realistic images that are imbued with a light, airy, almost evanescent quality, yet which nonetheless simultaneously draw attention to their very physicality, their concreteness, even a certain prosaic quality. They are reminiscent of *arte povera* objects, in the choice of materials used by Weinstein, even though the materials that he uses, unlike the stone, wood, glass and metal used by the Italian artists of the 1960s movement, are impure, corrupted and often synthetic. Gal Weinstein's work is a response to a world that no longer resembles the era when Mario Merz, Giulio Paolini, and Giuseppe Penone were producing their first works. Gal Weinstein's world is a world that has seen the catastrophes of Chernobyl and Fukushima, and the disastrous social and ecological consequences of dangerous bioengineering experiments. It is a world where access to what we have always thought of as embodying the 'natural' appears to be no longer available – which is why Gal Weinstein's images are of necessity made of 'unnatural', industrial, transformed materials.

Furthermore, the scenes portrayed by Weinstein represent the very roots of the disasters that have laid waste to our heritage and/or their consequences: views of despoiled landscapes, tornados and tsunamis that are simultaneously unforeseeable and inevitable. The fact that these natural disasters are explicitly represented by the artist makes us realise the very contemporary paradox that regardless of our knowledge of potential or actual threats (and notwithstanding the fact that we have come face to face with these threats) our instinct to react remains weak or non-existent.

These images seem to be set in a nonspecific time which suggests both past and future, both history and science fiction. We are both before and after the catastrophe, as vulnerable to it as we are protected from it (the desert being of course the site of both retreat and contemplation). This is the moment, suspended in time, that Gal Weinstein seizes, in all its strange, Wagnerian beauty.