

Kahn & Selesnick

Truppe Fledermaus & The Carnival at the End of the World

May 15 – July 3, 2014

Opening Reception with the artists: Thursday, May 15, 2014, 6-8pm

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Yancey Richardson is pleased to present *Truppe Fledermaus & The Carnival at the End of the World*, the fifth exhibition at the gallery by the collaborative duo Kahn & Selesnick. Known for elaborately staged metanarratives blending historical events with their own Dadaist performance, the darkly humorous visual fantasies of Kahn & Selesnick operate as wry metaphor, addressing economic, political, and ecological crises around the globe.

Utilizing photography, drawing, printmaking, sculpture and performance, the artists create robust mythic realities for each project, building imaginary, character-driven fictions from kernels of obscure historical truth. Previous bodies of work have addressed climate change and hyperinflation in 1920s Germany (*Eisbergfreistadt*), technology, space exploration and societal collapse (*Mars: Adrift*

on the Hourglass Sea, and *The Apollo Prophecies*), oil, spirituality and the uneasy divide between East and West (*City of Salt*), and post-civilization tribalism (*Scotlandfuturebog*).

Kahn & Selesnick's latest project follows a fictitious cabaret troupe – Truppe Fledermaus (Bat Troupe) – who travel the countryside staging absurd and inscrutable performances in abandoned landscapes for an audience of no one. The playful but dire message presented by the troupe is of impending ecological disaster, caused by rising waters and a warming planet, the immediate consequences of which include the extinction of the Bat, in this mythology a shamanistic figure representing both nature and humanity. In one sense, the entire cabaret troupe can be seen as a direct reflection of the artists themselves, both entities employing farce and black humor to engage utterly serious concerns.

The exhibition includes photographs, sculpture and ephemera. A large wall of drawings, posters and handbills advertises the performances of Truppe Fledermaus while opposite, an installation of 100 photographic prints serves as the primary visual record of the troupe's characters and activities. Titled *100 Views of a Drowning World*, the series references Japanese Ukiyo-e prints, which described a floating world of pleasure and beauty. Kahn & Selesnick invert that concept to illustrate instead a world that is sinking into a marsh.

The artists Nicholas Kahn and Richard Selesnick have collaborated for more than twenty years on projects including *Scotlandfuturebog*, 2000; *City of Salt*, 2001; and *Apollo Prophecies*, 2004, all published in subsequent books by Aperture Press. The work of Kahn & Selesnick is held in the collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, Addison Gallery of American Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Fogg Museum of Art, and the National Portrait Gallery.

For visuals, please contact Ian Rios at irios@yanceyrichardson.com.