

**Rodrigo Matheus**

*Soft Spectacle*

9 September – 4 November 2017

Ibid Gallery is pleased to present the debut Los Angeles solo exhibition of new works by Rodrigo Matheus. The Brazil-born, Paris-based artist uses a metaphorical assemblage of design, architecture, and natural material to create installations, sculpture, and collage which challenge the perception of objects as subjects by detaching them from their routine uses. We are also pleased to present *Soft Spectacle* as part of the Participating Gallery Program of Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA.

Matheus's arrangements group together common objects and materials to create disquieting structures that subvert Cartesian notions of form and function given by modernity and its industry. In dialogue with the surrounding architecture, his elegantly displayed materials inhabit bodies to personify the absurdity underlying a desire for progress. His poetic arrangements initially appear indulgent in their aesthetic sensitivity to scale, material, and form. Things come together to form inherent kinships – a traditional Austrian hat is presented with a pear, skateboard, and hand-blown glass display jar to suggest that any of these objects existing in the world without the others would be unjust. As Matheus's arrangements and installations are unraveled by the eyes and body of the viewer their underlying affinities, characteristics, and relationships to one another transform the objects into subjects, squeezing the artist out of the picture as little more than facilitator.

But Matheus is obviously more than a gatherer of things. He is a thinker through material, especially ephemera and the discarded. For this new series of collages, Matheus arranges anachronistic banker's notes, land deeds, photographs, and paperwork to create maps of geography, history, and visibility. With the relationship between the New World and Old World in mind on the eve of the Getty's PST: LA/LA, the collages consider the economic pie-cutting of the Americas by Europe. Recalling marionette strings and navigational charts, the currency papers and land deeds are mixed in with photographs of European migrants in consideration of the forces of colonization on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. The collages remain open in their reading, cautious of re-telling stories already calcified in public thought.

The associations proposed by the group of works offer a tale that evokes, through its arrangements, the traumatic process of colonization, modernization, and, therefore, globalization. *Soft Spectacle* brings a resonance that allows to perceive this process not necessarily as a continuation of facts but perhaps as a story that questions the relevance of a system whose collective success ignores the fragility of the individuals crushed and absorbed by society.

Rodrigo Matheus was born in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1974. He received an MA from the Royal College of Arts, London. He has been included in institutional exhibitions including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade; Phoenix Museum of Art, Phoenix; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Swiss Institute, New York; Al Riwaq Museum, Doha, Qatar; Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm; New Museum, New York; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; and Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, São Paulo. He currently lives and works in Paris.

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Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 6pm