

Mihai Nicodim Gallery

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Jack Lavender

'Glistening Echoes of a Slow Walk Home.'

April 19th – May 31st 2014

Opening Reception: April 19th 2014, 6-9 pm

Mihai Nicodim Gallery is pleased to announce the U.S. solo debut of British artist Jack Lavender.

The show's title is in equivocal reference to a ritual performed by the artist in early adolescence. Walks home from school lead Lavender past an old factory with a smashed window at street-level. Only the street-facing panel of the window's double-glazed glass was broken, presenting a small hole into which he could stuff varied materials gathered on these walks. Old candy wrappers, chewing gum, twigs, leaves, left over soda... The materials Lavender dropped between the two panes settled in layers over time, their composite ultimately presenting an image. While the artist's account provides framework for some of the new forms in the exhibition, its significance is preternatural. For Lavender, autobiography is only one of many illusory tools used to examine and distinguish between our individual experiential pasts and the collective, culled histories of culture-at-large.

For his exhibition at Nicodim, Lavender has created a large series of sculptural work utilizing a distinct method of object-classification characteristic to the artist's greater practice. Wall-based, hanging and freestanding, Lavender's work draws both from low-Pop culture and the natural world, the details of his materials wavering fastidiously between cult and the occult. Large glass units are filled with consciously compiled debris; both organic and manufactured, the materials fester within their vitrines, only disrupted by the artist's intervening shots of hyper-colored pigment. This art-historicized interjection is also mimicked in the floor and ceiling works in which elegant metal tubes are affixed and strapped with common, everyday goods such as an incense burner or a crumpled can. In either instance it's difficult to determine which gesture Lavender would claim as his intervention: the pigment or the debris, the metal pole or its adornment. Within this question lies the idiosyncrasy of his conceptual posit.

For Lavender, subjective 'histories' are less compelling than the cultural production and evolution of ritual itself. As childhood ritual may be reexamined as auspice for a lifetime in art making, Lavender's work nods both to the absurdist and sentimentalist. In result his forms circumvent both form and function - objects assumed to be 'found' could easily have been fabricated and vice versa. This uncanny dialogue is present throughout the new work, exemplifying Lavender's ongoing interest in material origin as well as the modes and techniques through which an object's provenance may be redefined through presentation.

Jack Lavender (b.1983, Canterbury) lives and works in London. Recent exhibitions have included 'Teen Paranormal Romance', The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, Chicago (2014), 'The Unpainted Landscape', Mihai Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles (2013) and 'Dreams Chunky' (solo exhibition), The Approach, London (2013). Forthcoming exhibitions include 'Pre-pop to Post-human: Collage in the Digital Age', Hayward Touring Exhibition, to be first presented at Hatton Gallery, Newcastle, UK (2014).