



Press Release

The show has a long title that I don't recall anymore

Pascal Hachem

15 September - 2 December 2017

Private View: 14 September, 6.30pm-8.30pm

Exhibition Open: Tues-Sat, 11am-6pm, FREE

The Mosaic Rooms, 226 Cromwell Road, London SW5 0SW



under the table, under the bridge (2010) Pascal Hachem. Image courtesy of the artist and Selma Feriani Gallery

The Mosaic Rooms present a solo exhibition by Lebanese artist Pascal Hachem. In this new body of work, displayed for the first time, the artist interrogates experiences of his home city of Beirut. Facing life in a city of both daily instability and overwhelming fragmentation how does an individual or society remember their past? The search for traces is recurrent in these works, as Hachem questions the meaning of what we remember and why. This exhibition offers timely reflections widely applicable to contemporary situations of political and social unease.

These preoccupations are explored in a series of installations. In the manner of ready-mades, Hachem combines or alters ordinary domestic items and displaces them into the art gallery or public spaces to unexpected effect. Hachem activates these passive objects to become subjects, resonant with the potential for action. In *the stone in my pocket* installed in the basement gallery, several pairs of trousers hang suspended in the air above mirrors, a stone is placed where each right foot should be. The leg of one of the pairs of trousers lifts and drops repeatedly throughout the day, the stone hitting the glass. At some point the accumulated impact will break the mirror beneath, splintering its reflection. The works create physical traces, but the traces point to absence. The shattered mirror becomes the record of this repeated act, the cause does not remain.

In *back to square one* two irons move continuously in opposite directions across the floor ironing a pile of flour, a staple ingredient and symbol of community. The passing of the iron is registered in the precise flatness of the flour, but the possibility of disruption is also present, the smooth surface could break beneath the iron. In *left under* a series of wire brushes is mounted to the wall. A mechanised device scrapes them up the wall each day so layers of paint from previous exhibitions are gradually revealed. The result of the repetitive actions enacted in these works remains unpredictable. Deliberately undocumented, the original form may not even be recalled.

For Hachem, the trace becomes meaningless as the search to understand or remember its origin cannot be fulfilled. His use of repetition hints at the impossibility of grasping meaning in the face of successive events. Smaller visual interventions installed in the gallery and its exterior seem to provoke humorous and absurd responses to the challenge of making sense of our surroundings.

Hachem's work explores a contradiction, in which a sense of powerlessness to act or understand exists alongside invitations to act. The repetition of nonsensical actions can create a sense of distance, yet the works often invite participation. By presenting these visual conundrums to interact with, Hachem is prompting the viewer to be present, to observe and carefully consider what is happening around them. The outcome of which he leaves to the individual.

About the artist

Born in 1979, Pascal Hachem is based in Beirut. His work has been shown internationally including solo shows at La Vitrine, Beirut (2017), Selma Ferani Gallery, Tunisia (2016), Soulangh Artist Village, Taiwan (2015) and Federica Schaivo Gallery, Italy (2013). Group exhibitions include The Mosaic Rooms, London (2015), Dak'Art (2014), Gwangju Museum of Art, South Korea (2014) and Vanvitelliana, Italy (2012). In parallel to his artistic work Hachem co-founded 200grs, a design studio, and currently teaches at the American University of Beirut (AUB).

Notes to press

- Pascal Hachem is available for interview. Images and more details are available on request.
- The artist will perform live in a one-off event for the exhibition on the 5 October. He will speak at the V&A on 22 September and at The Mosaic Rooms on the 7 October.
- The exhibition will be accompanied by a public programme of talks and events.
- This exhibition is part of London Design Festival, Brompton Design District, and has been supported by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's Arts and Culture Service.
- Entry to the exhibition is free. The Mosaic Rooms are open 11am-6pm, Tuesday-Saturday.
- The Mosaic Rooms are a leading London-based non-profit cultural organisation dedicated to supporting and promoting contemporary culture from and about the Arab world. They provide an international platform for the arts, particularly new work, and create opportunities for collaboration and professional development between artists, collectives and organisations from the Arab world and the UK. They do this through free contemporary art exhibitions, multidisciplinary events, artist residencies and their engagement programme. They work in partnership with national and international organisations to disseminate their programme to the widest possible audience. The Mosaic Rooms is run by Rachael Jarvis, Director. The Mosaic Rooms form part of the A.M. Qattan Foundation.
- The Mosaic Rooms are situated on the corner of the Cromwell and Earls Court Road in Kensington, London. Visit www.mosaicrooms.org