

KÖNIG LONDON

JULIAN ROSEFELDT | THE SWAP

23 MAY – 23 JUNE 2018

OPENING: 22 MAY, 6 – 8 PM

KÖNIG LONDON takes pleasure in presenting Julian Rosefeldt's (b. 1965) solo exhibition. On view is his film installation titled "The Swap" from 2015.

On the surface, *The Swap* appears to parody a scene from a classic gangster film of covert dodgy dealings, yet Rosefeldt's manipulation thrusts it into contemporary reality. Set at a deserted container terminal, two rival mobs pull up in cars, about to perform the familiar briefcase exchange of concealed goods. Clad in leather, guns poised; Rosefeldt plays once again with our stereotypical expectations, luring the viewer into a sense of familiarity until an unpredictable turn challenges our perception and exacerbates seemingly subtle aspects of their behaviour. True to the style of many of his works, Rosefeldt refrains from using language; gestures are exaggerated and the exchange plays out into a dance with the briefcases forever changing hands. The absence of language amplifies these subtleties through the intensification of sounds such as the squeaking of leather and the shuffling of feet on the dampened tarmac. Circular motifs and camera motions echo the endless trade cycle as the viewer becomes paradoxically both lost and engrossed in the repetition. The artist's choice of dancers, as opposed to actors, allows for a choreography of precision to play out, with the performers halting intermittently before descending once more into a whirlwind routine.

The absurdity of the endless swap can be read as a comment on the increasingly uncontrollable monetary transactions, and the depleting sense of their significance, which have become simultaneously ritualistic yet elusive to those who live in today's globalised world. The dislocated uniformity of the surrounding shipping containers come to symbolise globalisation - their inexpensive ease having changed the shape of the world's trade economy. The containers' looming presence provides the physical backdrop for the gangsters' infinite trade as their metaphorical imminence descends upon society.

Works by Julian Rosefeldt are represented in major public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Nationalgalerie Berlin, Berlinische Galerie, Goetz Collection, and the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney. Recent solo exhibitions have been presented at the École des Beaux Arts de Paris (2017); Nikolaj Kunsthal, Copenhagen (2017); Villa Stuck, Munich (2017); Park Avenue Armory, New York (2016); and Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2016). Concurrently with Rosefeldt's exhibition at KÖNIG LONDON, his works are featured in the exhibitions at the Hungarian National Gallery, the 1st Riga Biennial, and at the Draiflessen Collection.

Text: E. Lapper

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OPENING HOURS
WED – SAT 11AM – 6PM
OR BY APPOINTMENT