

16 MARCH 2015

Exhibition of new silkscreens by British artist John Stezaker opens at the Approach



LONDON - The Approach is pleased to announce an exhibition of new silkscreens by British artist John Stezaker. Best known for his collage work re-appropriating found film stills, actor's portraits and postcards, Stezaker has returned to making large-scale monochromatic silkscreen prints which he was producing alongside the collage works during the mid 1980s and early 1990s.

The Roman philosopher Pliny the Elder's legend concerning the origins of painting has it that the first painting came about through an act of projection. The inventor of painting, Dibutades, on the eve of the departure of her lover for the Trojan wars, decided to make permanent the silhouette of his shadow cast onto the wall of her home by lamplight. In doing so, she inaugurated a history of pictorial representation in which projection and the fixing of shadow are always interconnected from painting to photography and cinema.

1940s and 1950s cinema in particular, seems to be making a transition between the blinding light of the spectacle of early cinema and the shadowy underworld to which film became increasingly attached in the post-war period. Stezaker's attachment to the image of a particularly British version of film-noir seems fascinated with exactly that transition from light to dark. The collages and silkscreens incise the stilled

moments of cinema with spatial metaphors of its light: the projector beam, the spotlight or the illuminated screen, otherwise the absent space of darkness in his 'shadow' figures.

These new canvas works pick up where the late 1980s silkscreens left off with the opposing absences of darkness and light. Through the process of large-scale silkscreen printing on canvas, Stezaker explores the 'larger than life' quality of the projected image.

John Stezaker (b. 1949, Worcester) lives and works in London. Stezaker has been influential to a number of developments in art over the last three decades, from Appropriation to Conceptual art, through to the re-emergence of collage. Stezaker won the Deutsche Börse Photography Prize in 2012. Recent exhibitions include: 2015: Collages, The Netherlands Fotomuseum, Rotterdam, The Netherlands. 2014: John Stezaker: New Silkscreens, Petzel Gallery, New York, USA; 19th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia. 2013: John Stezaker, Centre de la Photographie Genève, Switzerland; John Stezaker: Working from the Collection, Les Rencontres Arles Photographie, France; John Stezaker: One on One, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel; Marriage, Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, Milwaukee, USA. 2011: John Stezaker, The Whitechapel Gallery, London, touring to MUDAM, Luxembourg and Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, USA. 2010: Lost Images, Kunstverein Freiburg, Germany.