

ENTERING THE VOID

Jon Vogt Engeland & Karl Patric Näsman

29th of May - 20th of June 2013

Karl Patric Näsman och Jon Vogt Engeland have since December 2012 been working on the collaborative project *Entering the Void*. By appropriating the collection of several hundred paintings subject to the Rothko litigation in 1971-1979, they address a visual void that these Rothko-paintings suggest, along with a social void that the lawsuit indicated. The manifestation is presented at NAU gallery in a dual: an installation of ink-jet prints mounted in light boxes by K. P. Näsman, and a text based performance by J. V. Engeland.

In his work, K.P. Näsman has taken a use of freely circulating images to bring up the issue of image property and reproduction as form of art making. His work displayed at NAU gallery consist of four mutated Rothko-paintings that were among the collection traded illegally by the executors of Marlborough Gallery subsequent to Rothko's suicide. Put together and mounted in light boxes, Näsman's work can be seen as a paraphrase to M. Rothko's artwork, with an indication of the luminous glow of his paintings. Standing in front of Näsman's work, one could considerate the evaluation of art, based on different individual values. What happens when something considered of as high art, is transferred into something built in low material, with an indication of an advertising sign? Or when circulating, low quality images, are made into a file of high quality art, displayed in the gallery room?

In unison to K.P. Näsman's two-dimensional work, J.V. Engeland presents his piece in a text-based performance, using the concepts of speakeasy and parrhesia as a base for his presentation. While the speakeasy is a place where truth can be spoken but never referred to when outside of it, the parrhesia embodies a mode where truth is spoken directly and openly, ultimately with the risk of personal death. With his performance, J.V. Engeland activates these two conflicting terms, varying between making them play against each other and play together. His performance makes a remark on the lawsuit between Marlborough Gallery and Rothko's daughter, who sued the gallery in the attempt to have the collection returned to the family, where the paintings were found in the courtroom of a constant clash of rhetoric versus anti-rhetoric. Furthermore it can also be seen as a reference to the conflicts of free circulation of art images as opposed to the "pure experience" of art.

With the exhibition *Entering the Void*, the artists want to explore and discuss the unfamiliar of copyright and the art law, the conflicts between rhetoric versus anti-rhetoric as well as the on going subjects of truth and strategy of the artistic work.