



ON BOARD THE SHIPS AT SEA ARE WE

Robert Therrien, Lawrence Weiner, Rachel Whiteread

Exhibition Dates: February 23—May 18, 2019

Opening Reception: Saturday, February 23, 6-8pm

The FLAG Art Foundation | 545 West 25th Street, NY

The FLAG Art Foundation is pleased to present **ON BOARD THE SHIPS AT SEA ARE WE** on view **February 23-May 18, 2019** on its 9th floor. The exhibition situates four artworks in a surreal dialogue that shifts viewers' perceptions of scale, materiality, and the physical absence of the body. The exhibition presents Robert Therrien's monumental *No title (table and six chairs)*, 2003, alongside Rachel Whiteread's *Untitled (Pair)*, 1999, a duo of interlocking, cast mortuary slabs, and includes two wall-sized text works by Lawrence Weiner: *A MIRROR SCRATCHED AT THE BRIEF POINT TWIXT SILVER BLACK WHERE THE IMAGE TURNS TO RETURN TO SENDER*, and a newly-created aphorism* (from which the show takes its title) that is the artist's personal response to the current refugee crisis.

Through the physical and psychological experience of encountering **Robert Therrien's** sculpture of familiar domestic objects—a dining room table and chairs towering over ten feet tall—visitors surrender their bearings, succumbing to the nostalgia of childhood. Therrien creates the illusion of traditional wood grain furniture through a trompe-l'œil painting technique that disguises the table's steel and aluminum construction (weighing over 5,000lbs). Every presentation of this particular work conjures a slightly different narrative; in this exhibition, the six chairs akimbo might call to mind a dinner party that has hastily departed.

Rachel Whiteread's minimalist, gloss white sculptures *Untitled (Pair)*, 1999, extend Therrien's interest in materiality and the memory of the body. Sensual, ethereal, and somewhat ambiguous in form, these complementary works recall mortuary slabs, originally designed to display, capture, and drain bodily fluids. Cast from one another in bronze—one slightly concave, one convex—the works (in theory) would interlock to complete the other.

Lawrence Weiner, one of the forerunners of Conceptual art, contributes two iconic wall-sized typographic texts to the exhibition: one on the opening wall, the other on its reverse. *A MIRROR SCRATCHED AT THE BRIEF POINT TWIXT SILVER BLACK WHERE THE IMAGE TURNS TO RETURN TO SENDER*, executed in chrome lettering outlined in black, both reflects and obscures the Therrien and Whiteread sculptures across from it, uniting all three voices in the conversation.

Weiner draws subtle distinctions on his monochromatic text-based works, considering some minimalist sculptures and others aphorisms*, including his new work **ON BOARD THE SHIPS AT SEA ARE WE**. Though the artist's personal intention for this piece was to be a response to the global refugee crisis, like all his works, it welcomes individual interpretations.

About:

The FLAG Art Foundation, founded in 2008 by art patron Glenn Fuhrman, is a non-profit exhibition space that encourages the appreciation of contemporary art among a diverse audience. FLAG presents four to six exhibitions a year that includes artworks by international established and emerging artists, borrowed from a variety of sources. FLAG invites a broad range of creative individuals to curate exhibitions and works in-depth with artists to provide curatorial support and a platform to realize their own solo exhibitions.

FLAG's innovative approach to foster dialogue around contemporary art includes producing artist talks, artist-led workshops, and exhibition tours for school and museum groups. Based in the heart of Manhattan's Chelsea art district, FLAG and all its related programs are free and open to the public.

*WHAT IS BEING PRESENTED IS NOT A SCULPTURE BUT THOSE THINGS THAT COME FROM SCULPTURE THAT WE LEARN ABOUT THE WORLD THAT SEEM TO APPLY IN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES FOR CONVENIENCE SAKE, LET'S CALL IT AN APHORISM

THE SCULPTURE IS A SPECIFIC OBJECT WITHOUT A SPECIFIC FORM APHORISMS ARE NON SPECIFIC FORMS FROM AN UNSPECIFIC SITUATION WHOSE VALUE STRUCTURE IS INFORMED BY ITS RELATION TO SCULPTURE