



DIME-STORE ALCHEMY

Curated by Jonathan Rider

Exhibition Dates: June 5-August 17, 2018

Opening Reception: Tuesday, June 5, 6-8pm

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

Kader Attia	Vincent Fecteau	Damien Hirst	Carolee Schneemann
Nayland Blake	Tony Feher	Josh Kline	Nancy Shaver
Matthew Buckingham	Ryan Gander	Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt	Haim Steinbach
Sophie Calle	Robert Gober	Josephine Meckseper	Robert Therrien
Francis Cape	Mona Hatoum	Portia Munson	Nicole Wermers
Mark Dion	Susan Hiller	Curtis Talwst Santiago	Rachel Whiteread

“One can deduce and conclude that every object has two aspects: one current one, which we see nearly always and which is seen by men in general; and the other, which is spectral and metaphysical and seen only by rare individuals in a moment of clairvoyance...” - Giorgio de Chirico¹

The FLAG Art Foundation presents *Dime-Store Alchemy* from June 5-August 17, 2018, on the 9th floor. The exhibition features 24 contemporary artists who elevate everyday objects through the framing devices of cabinets, shelves, and containers. Contextualized within the broader legacy of artist Joseph Cornell (1903-1972) and his celebrated box constructions, this selection of artworks, and their safeguarded contents, addresses issues of identity, value, memory, and time.

“The genius of Cornell,” wrote poet John Ashbery on artist’s 1967 retrospective at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, “is that he sees, and enables us to see, with the eyes of childhood, before our vision got clouded by experience, when objects like a rubber ball or a pocket mirror seemed charged with meaning, and a marble rolling across a wooden floor could be as portentous as a passing comet.”² This spirit of re-seeing runs throughout each of the pieces in *Dime-Store Alchemy*—a phrase borrowed from Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Charles Simic’s beguiling book of short prose on Cornell.

Artworks by **Vincent Fecteau**, **Curtis Talwst Santiago**, and **Carolee Schneemann** are most directly related to Cornell’s dreamlike box constructions, which utilize found containers as the setting for their theatrical dioramas. Other artists push the boundaries of what could be considered a container: **Ryan Gander**’s suitcase and carry-on rendered in ghostly white marble; **Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt**’s dollar store lasagna pans-cum-bejeweled Catholic reliquaries; and **Nicole Wermers**’s baby changing station resurfaced in polished terrazzo. **Susan Hiller** combines spiritual and physical healing in her collection of sacred holy water, while **Tony Feher**’s suspended kickline of plastic bottles, and **Damien Hirst**’s cigarette butts meticulously arranged in a glass vitrine, each magnify items that are often disregarded. Featuring thousands of saccharine pink products collected over 25 years, **Portia Munson**’s room-sized installation—itsself a cabinet of curiosity—functions as both a portrait of femininity and excessive consumerism. Some works are autobiographical in nature: **Sophie Calle** memorializes her birthday gifts as evidence of her relationships and mortality, while **Francis Cape** traces his own career through a pair of impregnable wooden cabinets, cobbled from elements of his previous exhibitions.

¹ G. de Chirico, *Sull’arte metafisica*, in *Scritti/1. Romanzi e scritti critici e teorici 1911-1945*, edited by A. Cortellesa, Bompiani, Milan 2008, p. 289.

² Ashbery, John. “Cornell: The Cube Root of Dreams.” *ARTnews*, Vol. 66, No. 4 (Summer 1967), pp. 56-59.

About:

Jonathan Rider (b. 1983) is a New York-based artist, curator, and the Associate Director at The FLAG Art Foundation. Rider previously worked as Assistant Curator at Art in General from 2011-14, where he curated exhibitions of international contemporary artists including Youmna Chlala, Antanas Gerlikas, Alex Ito, Jong Oh, Marija & Petras Olšauskai, Lisi Raskin, The Still House Group, among others. Recent independent curatorial projects include *PLACE: Monumental Drawings by Dawn Clements, Cynthia Lin, Gelah Penn, Fran Siegel*, Equity Gallery, New York, NY (2016), co-curated with Gelah Penn, and *Martin Weinstein: Platonía*, MSW Studio, New York, NY (2016). Rider received a BA from Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, in 2005, and a MFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York, NY, in 2011. His artwork has been shown in recent exhibitions, including *Vitel Tonné*, The Pool NYC, Venice, Italy (2017); *Chaos/Control*, MW Project Space, New York, NY (2017); *Barely There*, Lesley Heller Workspace, New York, NY (2015); *2015:1947*, Equity Gallery, New York, NY (2015); among others.

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.

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