

| *Wake* {Art Market San Francisco 2023}

Wake



Group: Rudik Ovsepyan, Sinclair Vicisitud, objet A.D, Reisig and Taylor

Political-Economy Project at Art Market San Francisco

Fort Mason Center for Arts and Culture (2 Marina Blvd, San Francisco, CA 94109).

REISIG AND TAYLOR CONTEMPORARY

Spring 2023

Wake

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Duration: April 20 through 23, 2023.

Location: Fort Mason Center for Arts and Culture (2 Marina Blvd, San Francisco, CA 94109).

Type: Political-Economy Project.

Wake is an experimental group show taking-place at Art Market San Francisco in April 2023. The project presents mixed-media abstract work, lenticular photography, bronze sculpture, painting, and drawing. Surrounded by works by Sinclair Vicisitud, objet A.D, and Chris Reisig & Leeza Taylor, Armenian-born artist Rudik Ovsepyan (b. 1949) makes his debut at the gallery with an introductory selection of pivotal mixed-media works that began to awaken during the early 1990s. This will be the first time his work has been shown at an international art fair in the United States. (His work has been shown—and is currently housed—in several museum collections in Germany and Eastern Europe). Focusing on resounding themes of displacement, and the violence—or beauty!—of (b)orders, his work explores conscious accounts and unconscious drives pulsating his personal life and the history of the Armenian diaspora. With the rippling time and fractured history of Ovsepyan’s work forming the context for the work of all four artists, *Wake* structures itself as a series of movements in and out of consciousness, working with problems of sequence and memory, diachrony and synchrony, regression and recollection, by looping-together works that the gallery has already shown with work that has yet to be seen. The exhibition is a simultaneous movement in opposite directions: Ovsepyan’s work is set to wake in the sense of rising from darkness or obscurity; the other works return in wake of their emergence, in attendance at their own wake.

As the exhibition title begins to indicate, the plucked strands of this show are problems of temporality, (un)consciousness, sequence, and presentation (or ceremony); or, the question of how to encounter the same thing at different times, or different things at the same time? Equivocally, “Wake” suggests (commandingly) the act of arising from sleep as much as it refers to falling into death (while in view of others). In either case an other is present, either commanding or watching. This situates both a beginning and end—or, two moments of displacement: one from sleep, one from life. But it also suggests the mark of an aftermath, the *observation* of a passing-through... the wake of an object or an event, a rippling of time.... This is the primordial disturbance encountered in the exhibition: the rippling around each of the works.... Something like watching stones dropped into the dark pools of forgetting, but without knowing whether the stones are rising or falling....

In both Ovsepyan’s early figurative work and his later abstract work, the concurrent aesthetic influence of various movements of modern and contemporary art, as well as medieval Armenian manuscripts, is present across series. These medieval manuscripts are inscribed with highly decorative Armenian script and sophisticatedly organized, puzzle-like structures/geometries formed through colorfully patterned borders. Similarly, his work is also evidently influenced by the colorful and ornately arranged imagery of traditional Armenian rugs. (Though, he often revisions such imagery with a monochromatic palette, as in the included works from his *Labyrinth* series.) Initially and ultimately, however, Ovsepyan appears to be most energetically influenced by his own prolific and unrepentant mode of production. Effortlessly, but industriously, his work springs—*wakes*—from his work (in the wake of his work...). His work continually cycles. He is constantly moving from one series to the next, always exhausting a particular way of working until it comes to be folded into the next phase. And although each series or body of work has its own peculiarities, it is clear that, sequentially, the central matter of his work is simply the passage of time (and space) consumed by making them. This sense of preserving lost time

comes clearly into view in his “mummified” works, eternally resting between here and hereafter (as with *Zaun* (or *Fence*), the included “mummy” piece from 2010). These “mummified” pieces also recall the ancient historical connections between Egypt and Armenia. Mapping borders between worlds upon the bodies of his work, his art forms a record of a life of displacement. Consuming the refuse of his immigrations—cardboard, newspaper, found objects—his work builds the home he was never permitted to have (using all he has left). (Ovsepyan is a *former* member of the Fine Art Association of the USSR, having been banned for his refusal to paint in the propagandistic style of “social realism.”)

Gravitationally tied to Ovsepyan’s tidal body work, the themes of displacement, (im)permanence, memory, history (or temporality), consumption, and *transformation* are the central streams of the entire exhibition. Of course, coursing through all of these themes are the political and economic forces that drive migration, accumulation, and distribution (of culture, space, and wealth). As an art fair exhibition and therefore a condensed engagement with the market, this exhibitivite project must also form questions of political-economic structures (like “*the market*”) that govern or circulate works of art as financial objects. Confronting this context directly, the exhibition asks: How are artists, artworks, and exhibitions historically, conceptually, and economically linked by the fact of display and being made-visible in public? What is the difference between a gallery exhibition and a show organized for an art fair (or an art market)? What is the role of the gallery-space in rendering diachronic connections between works exhibited at the same time, as well as in separate exhibitions? How might the gallery operate as a synchronic nexus between problems of political-economy and realizations of cultural-production? These are some of the general questions the gallery begins to engage through specificity of the artists and works exhibited in the context of Art Market San Francisco.

Harboring this critical demeanor, the group of works form a community and temporary homeland that exists everywhere and nowhere, consisting entirely in the relations between the works and the artists, beyond the enclosure of any single (b)order. But, no matter what, the artwork remains tied to the market (if only by the effects of desire and consumption.) The place of this contradiction—a beyond that is also within—constructs the space of the gallery/booth as a kind of tension or torsion between works and worlds. On the level of the materiality of the works, the resonances are perhaps most evident in Vicisitud’s and Ovsepyan’s use of leftover, discarded, and recycled materials as the surfaces and subjectiles of their work. Circularly, both artists consume what has already been consumed. But, across all of the works, the traces of memory—or, with Vicisitud’s work, the physical marks of being made—are the sinews of the show. In the included collaborative lenticular work by objet A.D and Chris Reisig & Leeza Taylor, a not-so-familiar familial scene twitches between the place of some scene recalled and the displacement of a dream. This undecidability of here or there, then or now, is the oscillating movement guiding encounters with each of the works. The use of the lenticular medium by Chris Reisig and Leeza Taylor throughout the exhibition is a core engine of this oscillation insofar as it is a “pop” material being adapted its most minimal (and yet most self-conscious) form, displaced as a membrane between vision, hallucination, and memory in *Orchid*, *Odilia*, and *Aspen Grove*. In effect, the lenticular lens positions a border between un/realities. Awakenning this betweenness, the undecidable, non-orientable spaces and figures in sculptures and paintings/drawings by objet A.D insist on the impossibility of determining the precise placement of a border, while nevertheless insisting on the shifting reality realized by the simple placement of a line or limit. Thus, paradoxically, it is precisely this borderless border, this shifting limit between emergence and disappearance, that is repeatedly set adrift and re-found between each work included in the exhibition.

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A Note on Economy:

In the context of art fair exhibitions such as this, Reisig and Taylor Contemporary organizes shows as direct encounters with the market, and therefore as a unique way of facing the public and the economy. As a gallery which aims to focalize the often absent political-economic context of exhibitions as part of the literal material of the gallery-space, it is important that the gallery takes-up the space of an art fair as an opportunity to critically engage the economic structures governing the transaction and circulation of artwork. The gallery takes the context of the market as a question of how artworks circulate and what it means for an artwork to become a financial object that is wholly attached to the work of art (or at least its significance), while also having almost no relation to the object or encounter in itself. Therefore, there is the question of the work of art “before and after” the market—before it becomes something else, somewhere else. This particular problem-place of vision, desire, object, consumption, and exchange structures the critical formulation of *Wake*.

Bios

Rudik Ovsepyan (b. 1949: Armenia); currently living in Los Angeles.

Rudik Ovsepyan is a *former* member of the Fine Art Association of the USSR, having been banned for his refusal to paint in the propagandistic style of “social realism.” He continued to paint abstract art and was therefore placed on a dissident list which prevented him from immigrating to the United States (his ultimate wish). Following his near-death experience during the 1988 Spitak earthquake in Armenia, Ovsepyan’s artistic production became rampant and compulsive as he worked-through the trauma of that nightmarish event.

After the earthquake, Ovsepyan and his family moved to Germany in 1990, the same year that the German Democratic Republic (or East Germany) was dissolved and the Berlin Wall dismantled. Though he and his family struggled as refugees in Germany and were marginalized by state institutions, he was, ironically, able to gain citizenship through his art, eventually becoming a member of the Fine Art Association of Germany. His *Red* series, which was shown at Stadtkloster in Kiel, Germany, was his first movement towards abstraction as a way of examining the unconscious, frenzied—but nonetheless *ordered*—pulsations of his practice as a way of recording what he could not otherwise process following the earthquake. These works display the space of his nightmares as ecstatic and harmonious, but slivered and collapsing fields of urban form seen through the red haze of hellish memory. These paradoxically tied themes of building, memory, and (dis)order become the fundamental elements of his abstract work produced from this series onward.

However, unlike the oil-on-paper *Red* series, the ensuing abstract works he produced while living in Germany (and later the United States) are almost exclusively mixed-media. At first, much of the spark of his shift toward mixed-media seems to have come from necessity. Since he and his family were constantly moving under difficult circumstances, they were often unable to bring his work with them, and, therefore, Ovsepyan was forced to constantly recreate bodies of work with whatever he had (and with whatever would be light enough to travel with). One of the materials that is now a constant source in his work—cardboard—was a residue from this constant movement, the endless packing and unpacking of boxes, that came to be incorporated into his work. As both a literal and symbolic marker of his displacement, cardboard becomes the interstitial surface holding-together the patchwork of spaces, places, and times that make-up his unsettled homeland—as well as the primary material of his artwork. But there are traces of his movements and histories in other materials as well. For example, the newspaper clippings which are often collaged into many of the pieces from his current mode (1990-) always have both a local

and historical significance. While living in Germany, Ovsepyan obsessively collected vintage newspapers from the Nazi-era and included these in his works. Sometimes the newspaper is left visible and entirely legible, sometimes it is slightly obscured; and sometimes it is entirely painted-over or encased by the materials—each variation showing a different moment of synthesis between memory/history (between what one does and what has already happened).

Re-finding and redefining his own narrative through the history of state violence in Germany, Ovsepyan found a deep connection between the Holocaust and the genocide of the Armenian people carried out by the Ottomans. This relation to the violent treatments of other marginalized groups in his new countries of residence became even more layered and complex upon his immigration to the United States. In his work *Borderline* (2009), created after immigrating to the United States from Germany, there are both newspaper clippings from Nazi-era German newspapers, as well as clippings from various U.S. publications having to do with civil rights, race relations, and the assassination of Martin Luther King Junior. With each phase of Ovsepyan's life, he seamlessly folds one place into another, one history into another, through the act of his memory recorded on a surface. (And in his most recent body of work, he incorporates pills leftover from his wife's work as nurse as elements in his collaged pieces.) Moreover, his waxy "mummified" pieces—such as *Zaun* (2021)—reach even further into the annals of the Armenian diaspora, recalling the ancient historical connections between Armenia and Egypt. With his works forming these tide pools of temporal and migratory connections, his oeuvre always encounters itself as a simultaneous event of memory and history. This synchronic moment between personal life and historical context is a primary process of Ovsepyan's work.

Ovsepyan's works are included in public and private collections in Russia, Europe, Israel, Canada, and the United States, including: UNESCO, Geneva, Switzerland; Pushkin Museum, Moscow; Museum of Modern Art, Armenia, Yerevan; Museum of Modern Art, Georgia, Tblisi; Sparkasse Schleswig-Holstein, Germany; Sparkasse, Muenster, Germany; Provincial Versicherung; Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, Kiel, Germany.

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Sinclair Vicisitud (Los Angeles, CA)

Sinclair Vicisitud is a (born-and-raised) Los Angeles artist who has previously exhibited in group shows at Wönzimer gallery. Their first solo exhibition is presented by Reisig and Taylor Contemporary in Los Angeles. Vicisitud's paintings are both autobiographical and allegorical, equivocally drawn-out from life, literature, and split mythologies.

Working in oil, acrylic, charcoal, and mixed-media, Vicisitud's figural, expressive work usually takes-place through a practice of painting that interweaves gestural imprints and studied forms. However, this surface-process is often navigated through the multi-dimensional, sculptural features of the canvas or frame. At times, their (initially) painterly work is totally transformed into a sculptural object.

Beginning with their (chosen) name, their work takes the form of a rattling against the strictures of their own perceived identity. They work with themselves as the place of an otherness, an errancy—a churning between darkness and light. Their raw, hauntingly expressive work shifts and moves, but always re-finds its footing through the brutal honesty of their practice: working with what they have, when they have it, and while they can.

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objet A.D (Los Angeles, CA)

Formed in 2018, objet A.D consists of the couple E (b. 1993: Los Angeles, CA) and Z (b. 1991: Salem, MA). Together, they work between painting, drawing, and sculpture. Their work has been shown in a group show and in dual projects in Los Angeles.

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Chris Reisig and Leeza Taylor (b. 1963: Los Angeles, CA)

Chris Reisig and Leeza Taylor are an art duo living in Los Angeles. Both their early works in analog photography and current works in lenticular assemblage are exhibited in galleries throughout the United States, including: [The White Room Gallery](#) (Bridgehampton); [Julie Zener Gallery](#) (Kentfield, Mill Valley); and [Aspen Art Gallery](#) (Aspen). In 2020, they founded Reisig and Taylor Contemporary.

*Please contact the gallery directly via email with any questions regarding pricing or acquisition:

gallery@reisigandtaylorcontemporary.com

*You may also access high-resolution images and details of the exhibited works by contacting the gallery directly at the email address provided above.

Wake



Rudik Ovsepyan

Untitled

2009

Mixed-Media on Cardboard.

17 x 15.5 inches.

Series: *Labyrinth*



Rudik Ovsepyan

Untitled

2004

Mixed-Media on Cardboard.

17 x 15.5 inches.

Series: *Labyrinth*



Rudik Ovsepyan

Untitled

2011

Mixed-Media on Cardboard.

14 x 12.5 inches.

Series: *Labyrinth*



Rudik Ovsepyan
Borderline
2009
Mixed-Media on Linen.
36 x 36 inches.



Rudik Ovsepyan

Zaun

2010

Mixed-Media on Cardboard.

11.5 x 10.5 inches.



Sinclair Vicisitud
La espalda a las Flores / Back to Flowers
2022
Acrylic, Oil, and Charcoal on Canvas.
24 x 18 x 1 inches.



Sinclair Vicisitud
Georgia O'keeffe
2022
Acrylic and Charcoal on Canvas.
24 x 18 x 1 inches.



Sinclair Vicisitud

Papa

2023

Oil and Acrylic on Canvas.

48 x 36 x 1.5 inches.



Sinclair Vicisitud
Cuando los búhos lloran
2023
Oil and Acrylic on Canvas.
55 x 39 x 2 inches.



(View: Left to Right)

Sinclair Vicisitud

Jeane Nude

2022

Oil on Canvas.

24 x 18 x 1 inches.

Addressing the terribly dressed man

2021

Oil, Acrylic, and Charcoal on Canvas.

24 x 18 x 1 inches.



objet A.D

El Llano en llamas—or, Flash Points and Screen Phases
2023

(Left) *A House Fire*

Gesso, Charcoal, Chalk, Oil, Oil-pastel, and Oil-stick on Panel.

(Right) *A Fire Like A Crystal*

Gesso, Charcoal, Chalk, Cold Wax, Oil, Oil-pastel, and Oil-stick on Panel.



objet A.D

How I've Come Undone—or, What Skin Won't Be

2023

Charcoal, Chalk, Oil, and Oil-stick on Paper.

17 x 14 inches. (23 x 20 inches framed. Frame made by artist: wood and sumi ink.)



objet A.D

Why They Won't Wake Night In Me—or, A Promise You Keep Outside

2023

Gesso, Charcoal, Chalk, Oil, and Oil-stick on Panel.

Part of Diptych: *Treatments and Cures* (2023).



objet A.D

At the Navel of a Dream—or, the Sitter and the Sower

2023

Gesso, Charcoal, Chalk, Oil, and Oil-stick on Panel.

Part of Diptych: *Treatments and Cures* (2023).



objet A.D

How To Read The Writ(h)ing On The Wall Without Worrying About What Never Happened To Nebuchadnezzar—or, an Interpretation of Dreams and an Analysis of the Divine Origins of Graffiti in the Discovery of the Monumental Status of an Adulterated Arborescence

2023

Charcoal and Oil-stick on Paper.

11 x 14 inches. (17 x 20 inches framed. Frame made by artist: wood and sumi ink.)



objet A.D in collaboration with Reisig & Taylor
Radioactivities and Radiophonies
2022
Lenticular (Mixed Technique).
40 x 30 inches.



Reisig and Taylor

Aspen Grove

2018

Lenticular (Photography and Mixed Technique).

40 x 30 inches.

No. 3/10 [Last remaining edition].



Reisig and Taylor

Odilia

2022

Lenticular (Photography and Mixed Technique).

38 x 30 inches.

Limited Edition of 10.



Reisig and Taylor

Orchid

2022

Lenticular (Photography and Mixed Technique).

38 x 30 inches.

Limited Edition of 10.



objet A.D
Always, Already
2021
Bronze.
4 × 8 × 7 3/4 inches.
Limited Edition of 13.



objet A.D
Oh, Me
2021
Bronze.
6.5 × 7 × 11 inches.
Limited Edition of 13.



objet A.D
Monument, Memorial, Martyr
2021
Bronze.
12 × 6 × 3.5 inches.
Limited Edition of 13.



objet A.D

Ozymandias

2021

Bronze.

14.5 × 3.5 × 1.75 inches.

Limited Edition of 13.



objet A.D
The Other Shore
2021
Bronze.
11.75 × 5 × 2.25 inches.
Limited Edition of 13.