

sigismond de vajay

UNREACHABLE EMPIRES

Exhibition April 13th to June 1st, 2013

Opening Saturday, April 13th 2013 starting at 3 p.m.

Xippas Gallery is happy to present to Sigismond de Vajay's first solo exhibition in Paris. For this occasion, the artist displays two installations/objects and twenty drawings from the series entitled *Unreachable Empires*, a group of ninety-nine drawings that will appear in a book with the same name at the end of 2013. After his previous series, *Nouveaux Désastres*, also the subject of a publication, Vajay describes a solemn and gloomy world where he subtly and poetically depicts social differences and irregularities, authority and global control, and the systems that govern the planet.

Opaque, somber, and intriguing, "La légèreté de la matière" acts as a central piece: we see a black, shiny rectangle as tall as a man with smoke enclosed inside it. It functions as a mirror, a metaphor for our world, and a contemporary allegory of the platonic cave. The carefully crafted object's glimmering image gently confronts the dissolution of the intangible contents, creating a game of contradictions. On its pedestal, we see a bin of rubble – a universal element that evokes global deconstruction.

This recipient object evades complete comprehension and interacts with the drawings as if they were close-ups or entry points. The majority of these watercolors were inspired from photographs taken by the artist or images selected from the media. They consist of aerial views of rural landscapes, close-ups of beehives, images of contemporary buildings, pipelines, and even structures archiving technological evolutions. They function as figures and grids of mankind's communicational and organizational systems of all the people and things that form our planet. A sort of impossible inventory that questions each individual position in the vast intangible group. The project proves to be poignantly pertinent in today's globalized world where the economy, like information, is governed on a global level. This contemporary world depersonalizes the system, portraying it as a fictional entity, completely uncontrollable and unattainable. Sigismond de Vajay's work treats the byproduct of this abstract and monstrous machine: numbers. They appear in the quantity of figures that make up a certain drawing or his serial approach to production.

Creating a disenchanted gaze, the artworks' subjects endlessly vacillate between the human form and machine, between the individual and the mass, in an uncertain and destabilizing movement. All the productions of this protean artist, curator, and editor, have a dystopian aesthetic in common. In Sigismond de Vajay's artworks, beauty stems from our decadence and allows us to question the very notion of modernist progress. "Axis Mundi" is a sculpture formed from rubbish bins which interlock in order to vertically unfold in the space like a fragile guardian precariously balancing on his feet. Through humor and mockery and the most efficient use of symbolism, the artist employs one of the principal tools of modernist invention that delugates our contemporary society to a state of ruin.

Sigismund De Vajay (born in Paris in 1972) is Argentinian, Swiss, and Hungarian. He currently lives in Buenos Aires. He has shown projects in several institutions and galleries: Confort Moderne in Poitiers (2004), Les Abattoires in Toulouse (2006), Tranzit Foundation, Cluj, Romania (2003), Musée Cantonal des Beaux Arts du Valais in Sion, Switzerland (2004), Haus der Kultur, Salzwedel, Germany (2006), Musée des Beaux Arts in Lausanne, Switzerland (2006), MIS in Sao Paulo, Brazil (2010), Centro Cultural Chacao in Caracas, Venezuela (2010), Museo de Arte Moderno in Buenos Aires, Argentina (2011), Matucana100, Santiago in Chile (2007), PCdV, Valparaiso, Chile (2013), and also, Galeria Animal in Santiago de Chile (2007), Zavaleta LAB in Buenos Aires, Argentina (2006). His works are part of numerous private and institutional collections in Switzerland, France, Argentina, Chile and also in the United States.

Sigismund de Vajay has also developed several curatorial projects and has published many books of his drawings.