

**Berlin – L.A. Trilogy #1**

**Chris Engman**

Landscapes

**Opening:**

Friday, November 27, 2015, 6 – 9pm

**Exhibition Dates:**

November 27, 2015 – January 23, 2016



*Landscape for Candace*, Inkjet Print, 2015, 43 x 55,5 in, Ed. 6+2AP

*My work takes the human condition as its central theme and examines the most fundamental of issues: the inexplicable fact of our existence, the ungraspable experience of time, and the illusive and unknowable nature of reality. It calls attention to our misperceptions: the gulf that exists between how we see and how we think we see; how we think and how we think we think; and the inconstant and constructed nature of memory.*

Chris Engman

We are very pleased to announce “Landscapes”, an exhibition by photographer Chris Engman and the first part of our Berlin – L.A. trilogy. Following an invitation by 68projects, Engman (\*1978, lives and works in L.A.) worked in Berlin for two months during the summer of 2015. The result is an impressive series of photos, which once again questions the connection between image and reality and thus exposes our conventional seeing habits. The works from his Berlin studio are juxtaposed with photos taken on the West coast of the US, many of them in the desert.

At the origin of Chris Engman’s work there is an idea, a concept and in-depth research. Themes immanent to photography, such as time, transience, light and the question concerning the possibility of reproducing reality, are central to his work. Here the artist primarily works with deception, illusion and the irritation of the spectator. In the piece “Three Squares” (2006), only one of the depicted squares is actually a square, the other two being a rectangle and a trapezium respectively; the illusion is due to the positioning of the camera.

Chris Engman’s latest work “Landscape for Candace” was created in the summer of 2015 in his Kreuzberg studio. The title refers to Candace “Caddy” Compson, a character from Faulkner’s “The Sound and the Fury”. The novel uses a complex narrative structure, based on the inner monologues of three narrators, to recount the decline of a once-powerful Southern family. Engman’s work is similarly multi-layered. It shows a view of an artist’s studio, with a tree in the center. Only on closer inspection it becomes clear that this is an illusionistic construction of a room. The eye is hardly able to identify which elements in the room are “real” and which have been assembled and re-photographed from photocopies – such as the tree for example.

Whereas in this latest series, the artist’s studio is at the centre of his creations, Engman’s earlier works were produced during long drives to deserted places in the countryside along the US west coast, places he refers to as “settings”, or “empty canvasses” – free from disruptive associations and interpretations. These temporary interventions and sculptures were elaborately assembled, yet were made of the simplest building

materials, such as sand, plywood, rope or concrete stone. As soon as the photographic work was completed, the installations were abandoned and left to their own devices.

Chris Engman studied photography at the University of Washington in Seattle and the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. His works have been exhibited at numerous exhibitions in the US and in Europe. The artist is represented in many notable collections, such as the Houston Fine Arts Museum, the Henry Art Gallery, Seattle; the Ines Musumeci Greco collection, Rome; the Microsoft Collection, Seattle; the Manfred Leist collection, Munich, and the Sir Elton John collection, London.

Part II of the Berlin/L.A. trilogy will be a solo show by L.A. painter Michael John Kelly, who participated in the 68projects studio programme in Berlin in the late summer of 2015. The series will be completed in February / March 2016 with a group exhibition by several artists, who took part in a residency programme in Los Angeles, and whose work explores the Californian metropolis.

Chris Engman will be present for the opening.

Please join us for an **artist talk** with Chris Engman and Julia Rosenbaum on **Saturday, November 28** at **4pm** here at 68projects. We will send out a separate invitation prior to the event.

Please contact us for high res images, questions or if you need further information.

### **Berlin – L.A. Trilogy**

**# I** Chris Engman, *Landscapes*: 27.11.2015 – 23.1.2016

**# II** Michael John Kelly, *Language*: 30.1. 2016 – 5.3.2016

**# III** Group Show, *Los Angeles*: 12.3.2016 – 16.4.2016

### **Contact**

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