

**PAUL CHAN – SELECTED WORKS**

12 April to 19 October 2014

**PRESS RELEASE**

The exhibition of work by Paul Chan (b. 1973 in Hong Kong) at Schaulager is the largest and most comprehensive to date. Chan is one of the most versatile and unpredictable artists of his generation and certainly one of the most original voices in contemporary art today. His large-format digital projections *The 7ights* in 2007 at London's Serpentine Gallery and at the New Museum in New York in 2008, as well as his installations at the Venice Biennale in 2009 and documenta 13 in 2012 enjoyed great international acclaim.

Chan's interests range from current political and social issues to the timeless themes of history, literature, and philosophy. Inimitably playful and uninhibited, he addresses these in his art. A typical exponent of his generation, the artist, based in New York, passionately exploits the potential of the Web and its information overkill, creating links and reshaping the Net with unbridled energy. He is a video artist, a draftsman, and a painter, and he is equally versed as a writer and university lecturer. He has published widely on contemporary art, art theory, and issues of general cultural interest. He founded his own publishing company Badlands Unlimited for e-books, limited edition paper books and artist works in 2010.

The Schaulager invitation has given Paul Chan the opportunity to look back at his work and move forward. He has been living in Basel since January, working on the installation of his exhibition and teaching at Basel University and the Academy of Art and Design (Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst).

Chan combines existing and new works in an architecture that has been specifically designed for the exhibition, creating an artfully conceived and astonishing overall production. Sculptures, drawings, installations alongside light projections, animated pieces, invented fonts and site-specific interventions cast new light on the wealth and complexity of these fascinating works.

In addition to early video installations, such as *My birds... trash... the future*, 2004, rarely exhibited works on paper, sculptures, and works from the series *The 7ights* will also be on view. Following a limited selection at documenta 13, the Schaulager exhibition will include the first-ever presentation of all 1005 painted book covers that constitute *Volumes*, 2012. New works created especially for this exhibition play an important role. The *Arguments*, a complex that includes large-scale installations of electrical cords, critically reference the ubiquitous digital wiring of today's world in the twenty-first century. In contrast the *Nonprojections*, sculptural works presented here for the first time, draw attention to the daily flood of images we are exposed to. The projectors are obviously running, but as the title of these works already gives away, no images are projected from them to the world outside.

Instead viewers are invited to look into the lens of the machines to find traces of an elusive image.

The exhibition is conceived in terms of axes: heaven and earth, the here and the hereafter, good and evil, the dream of an alternative world and the reality of ours. On the ground floor, visitors encounter and explore the byways of positive and negative utopias; on the floor below they are confronted with relentlessly bald scenarios of reality. Here, in addition to new works, the famous video piece *Sade for Sade's Sake*, 2009, first shown at the Venice Biennale that same year, will also be on view.

Three books will be published in conjunction with the exhibition: *New New Testament*, issued by Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager, in collaboration with Paul Chan's press Badlands Unlimited. It documents the monumental work *Volumes*, 2012, which has been acquired by the Emanuel Hoffmann Foundation. All of the 1005 book covers in this impressive work have been reproduced, each complemented with a text by Paul Chan.

The catalogue of the exhibition, produced by Schaulager, *Paul Chan – Selected Works*, contains the "Selected Source Files," an overwhelming array of images designed by Paul Chan in collaboration with the graphic designers as a "picture book in a book," as well as installation views of the exhibition and an essay by Daniel Birnbaum.

The Laurenz Foundation, Schaulager and Paul Chan's press Badlands Unlimited have worked together to produce *Paul Chan: Selected Writings 2000-2014*. The wit and originality of this first anthology of writings by Chan will captivate interested lovers of art.

The exhibition has been conceived by the artist and was realized by the Schaulager team under the direction of Heidi Naef and Isabel Friedli.

An attractive program of talks, poetry nights, film screenings, lectures, guided and study tours, and a symposium will accompany the exhibition.

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