

LAS CIENEGAS PROJECTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KARINA NIMMERFALL

BENJAMIN LORD

KARA TANAKA

September 10 – October 8, 2011

Opening Reception: Saturday September 10, 7-10 pm

Las Cienegas Projects is pleased to present 3 new solo exhibitions including **Karina Nimmerfall: *Double Location (The Ambassador Hotel)***; **Benjamin Lord: *False Positives***; and **Kara Tanaka: *Bent-Light Night***

Main Gallery

KARINA NIMMERFALL

Double Location (The Ambassador Hotel)



Karina Nimmerfall, Video still from *Double Location (The Ambassador Hotel)*, 2007–08.
Three channel video installation (mixed media)

Las Cienegas Projects is pleased to present *Double Location (The Ambassador*

Hotel), a sculptural, three-channel video installation by Berlin-based Austrian artist Karina Nimmerfall. The starting point of the project is the legendary Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, built in 1921 and pulled down in 2006. The hotel is not only linked to the history of Hollywood – where in the Roaring Twenties the bold and beautiful were bustling about and which during the 1930s hosted the Oscar Nights six times – but also received negative fame, as Robert Kennedy was assassinated in its kitchen 1968. After the hotel was shut down in 1989, it was exclusively used as a movie set for film & television productions and ranged among the most widely used sets in Los Angeles. *Double Location (The Ambassador Hotel)* uses this history in order to reconstruct the famous hotel lobby; the reconstruction is not, however, an objective architectural model based on documentary material, but instead a virtual space grounded in collective memories and medially transported descriptions of space. Generated from a variety of layers of media information and designed as an active physical and sculptural space, the installation evaluates one's relation to mediated images and conventions. Playing with the phenomenon of a multiple film set and suggesting that "being on-site" implies moving through a series of image spaces, this three-dimensional enactment reacts upon the perception of the "real space" of the hotel, and thus on our own perceptions of reality.

Karina Nimmerfall is a visual artist based in Berlin, Germany. She studied Visual Arts at the Hochschule für bildende Künste in Hamburg, Germany and Art History at the University of Vienna, Austria. Nimmerfall was Visiting Artist-in-Residence in the Graduate Studies Program at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena (2010-2011). She was also awarded a fellowship at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris (2007) and the MAK Center for Art and Architecture in Los Angeles (2002), amongst others. Recent exhibitions include Kunstpalais Erlangen, Germany (2010); BAWAG Contemporary, Vienna, Austria; Kasseler Kunstverein, Germany (2009); Göteborgs Konsthall, Sweden; Bildmuseet, Umea, Sweden; Slought Foundation, Philadelphia; AR/GE Kunst Galleria Museo, Bolzano, Italy; Medienturm Graz, Austria (2008); Landesgalerie Linz, Austria and Camera Austria, Kunsthau Graz (2007). Her work was also included in the Bucharest Biennale 3 in 2008 and the 8th Havana Bienale in 2003. Upcoming presentations include a solo exhibition this fall at Galerie Grita Insam, Vienna, as well as a group exhibition at the Kunsthalle Mainz, Germany.

Project Space

BENJAMIN LORD

False Positives



Las Cienegas Projects is pleased to present *False Positives*, a solo exhibition by Benjamin Lord. The exhibition consists of three interrelated groups of works that together explore the poetics of time, material, presence and perception.

Within the gallery, three distinct but overlapping zones are defined. In the first zone, large color prints depict phosphenes, appearances of light caused by something other than light, a phenomenon well known since antiquity. These images build on a formal vocabulary initiated by *Eaton Canyon Phosphenalia*, a portfolio of color prints Lord created in 2006. The prints were created partly through the use of a computer, in order to "photograph" a hallucinatory phenomenon that is essentially unphotographable. In the second zone, a group of sculptures are displayed on a table. Set in gray wooden trays that evoke racks for oversized movable type, the objects narrate a fractured history of a fictional 19th century explorer. A text written by the artist in the voice of the explorer is sliced into four sections. In the third zone, transparent forms are displayed in front of the gallery windows. Sculpted in relief, the framed shapes evoke slabs of an abstract terrain described in meticulous, almost photographic detail, but whose original model is conspicuously absent. The difference between "looking at" and "looking through" becomes the basis of a poetic turn towards perception itself. Together, these three zones are installed in the manner of a tone poem, in which the various elements engage the space of the gallery without being specific to it. Discrepant forms and histories both real and fictional are allowed to resonate, creating a new image of the present.

Spanning the techniques of photography, video, drawing, sculpture, and bookmaking, Benjamin Lord's work often takes the form of a collection or sequence of images, objects and texts. Most recently, in 2010, *Humaliwo Chambers*, a set of twenty five color photographs in three portfolios, was published in a large edition as the Norton Christmas Project. Lord received his MFA from UCLA in 2002. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

Back Room
KARA TANAKA
Bent-Light Night



Kara Tanaka, *Bent-Light Night*, 2011. Courtesy of the artist and Simon Preston Gallery, New York

Until the advent of flight, the mountain summit was the closest humans could get to the heavens, the home of their gods or their notion of the beyond. The search for Mount Analogue, a mythical destination that first appeared in René Daumal's surrealist novel *Mount Analogue: A Tale of Non-Euclidean and Symbolically Authentic Mountaineering Adventures*, began with two simple principles: first, that there exists a mountain where humans can connect with the divine, and second, that the base of that mountain must be accessible to humans by the means inherent to their nature.

Las Cienegas Projects is pleased to present *Bent-Light Night*, a new sculptural installation by Kara Tanaka. Influenced by the historical search for secret locations and spiritual lands, both fictional and real, Tanaka was first drawn to the symbol of the mountain through Alejandro Jodorowsky's cult classic film, *The Holy Mountain*, and through Daumal's novel. Both narratives feature a team of adventurers who set out to find a mythical mountain and draw heavily on traditions of mysticism, polytheistic

...of my sacred mountain and their history, or legends of my sacred, polytheistic religions, Vedic traditions and early mythologies. In these stories - and countless others - the mountain is used as a symbol to propel humans beyond their limits physically, philosophically, experientially and intellectually.

Taking as truth the belief in the material reality of the mythical Mount Analogue, Tanaka uses unconventional methods for "determining" its physical location. A triptych of circular island "maps" carved into cowhides hang on the walls, accompanied by a central trio of altered European alphorns, each with their bells directed at the maps as though coaxing Mount Analogue to the surface of the image. The archipelago maps are formed by the natural patterning of the animal hides and further enhanced through Tanaka's shaving and carving of the skins. Her use of animal hides draws a parallel to the Tibetan iconographic image of flayed skin as a symbol for the destruction of the ego – as avid hunters of mythical mountains themselves, Tibetans often refer to a cycle of self-destruction and self-realization as an integral component to ascending a sacred mountain.

"Esoteric knowledge is not truly hidden but simply imperceptible to those who are not seeking it."

–Kathleen Ferrick Rosenblatt (on René Daumal)

Kara Tanaka received her MFA from CalArts in 2008, Postgraduate Diploma from Goldsmiths College, University of London in 2006 and BA from the University of California, Irvine in 2005. Recent solo exhibitions include *Hungry Human (Mountain Hunter)*, Simon Preston Gallery, NY (2011); *A Sad Bit of Fruit, Pickled in the Vinegar of Grief*, Collezione Maramotti, Italy (2010); and *Dissolver*, LAXART, Los Angeles (2008). Other recent selected exhibitions include *Death's Boutique*, a two-person show with Marco Rios at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (2010); *The distance between 2 points is often intolerable*, Brand New Gallery, Milan (2010); and the 2008 California Biennial at the Orange County Museum of Art.

Las Cienegas Projects is an artist-run project space and gallery focusing on large-scale, collaborative and project-based artworks by a broad range of local, national and international emerging and mid-career artists. LCP was co-founded and is co-directed by Steven Hull and Amy Thoner. For further information and press materials, please contact Amy Thoner at lascienegasprojects@gmail.com or 213-595-8017.

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