

Portikus is pleased to present the exhibition *House of Commons* with works by younger and internationally established artists. Throughout its duration, *House of Commons* changes constantly and thus sees itself less as a static group exhibition than as a dynamic project. Art works will be added, swapped out, and rearranged weekly. Each of these presentations will be enhanced by discussions of the works, film screenings, and performances. The exhibition is kicked-off with the juxtaposition of only two works: Danh Vo's sculpture *WE THE PEOPLE* (2011), a one-to-one replica of the Statue of Liberty in 225 fragments, of which Portikus shows a part of the foot, and *Passer en Angleterre, Accès terminal transmanche, Calais, juillet 2007*, a photograph by Bruno Serralongue that captures a moment of waiting in the lives of refugees on the French coast. Starting from this dual presentation, the exhibition continues to grow, and in subsequent chapters presents more photographs, paintings, sculptures, and video works.

*House of Commons* arose in response to the political events of recent months in Europe and the United States. A general change in mood can be sensed—events such as the Brexit referendum and the election of Donald Trump call into question the basis of democratic action and reveal the importance of constructive debate over different opinions and views. Against this backdrop, the exhibition presents both artistic works that deal explicitly with political or social issues as well as works dealing with more fundamental questions inherent in art itself. In this way, Portikus takes a political stance, argues through art, and using the simple gesture of juxtaposition, emphasizes the importance of dialogue and engagement with opposing opinions for our common coexistence.

The name of the exhibition is borrowed from the architecture of the British House of Commons, in which the members of the majority party sit across from the representatives of the opposition. The Frankfurt architect Paul Bauer took up this idea, which was first implemented in the Curia Julia of the Roman Senate in 29 BC, for the exhibition architecture in Portikus by installing two stands that face each other and function both as seating and as displays for art works. Thus, the architecture reflects the direct confrontation of two positions, opinions, or views and creates a space in which art works and bodies can always relate to each other.

*House of Commons* sees itself as an exhibition that sketches a likeness of contemporary artistic production and as a platform of debate, confrontation, and critical reflection. It ultimately points out that it is more important today than ever to devote ourselves to observing, listening and questioning, and to participating in public discussion.

Chapters

03.12.2016–04.12.2016

Bruno Serralongue, Danh Vo

06.12.2016–11.12.2016

Keren Cytter, Claire Fontaine, Jonathan Monk, Bruno Serralongue, Danh Vo

13.12.2016–18.12.2016

Fikret Atay, Monika Baer, Charlotte Posenenske, The Propeller Group & Superflex, Danh Vo

20.12.2016–08.01.2017

Basel Abbas & Ruanne Abou-Rahme, Monika Baer, Rossella Biscotti, Claire Fontaine, Ferenc Gróf, Roni Horn, Jonathan Monk, Charlotte Posenenske, Danh Vo

10.01.2017–15.01.2017

Sven Augustijnen, Monika Baer, Yto Barrada, Shadi Habib Allah, Roni Horn, Kapwani Kiwanga, Jonathan Monk

17.01.2017–22.01.2017

Sven Augustijnen, Yto Barrada, Banu Cennetoğlu, Michael Dean, Claire Fontaine, Shadi Habib Allah

24.01.2017–29.01.2017

Eric Baudelaire, Rossella Biscotti, Mohamed Bourouissa, Michael Dean, Charlotte Posenenske

Curated by Fabian Schöneich and Vivien Trommer (Kadist Curatorial Fellow 2016)

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