

David Hartt's photographs, videos, sculptures, and installations offer a sensitive and concise portrait of our post-industrial, post-communist, late-capitalist societies. The artist creates work that unpacks the social, cultural, and economic complexities of his various subjects. For Hartt, "place" is a way to investigate community, narrative, ideologies, and the intersection of private and public life..

In his first exhibition at Galerie Thomas Schulte Canadian artist David Hartt (born in Montréal in 1967) will present a new photographic series alongside a new film, whose genesis began with Robert Rauschenberg's influential journey along the East Coast of the United States in the autumn of 1980, which he had documented in a series of photographs. Hartt went on a similar journey from Boston to Atlanta and captured the territory using a drone camera, photographs and old recordings. In his new video *The Last Poet* Hartt focuses on urban and exurban areas that distinguish themselves through their ubiquity rather than regional specificity and presents to us the so-called Northeast megalopolis as a landscape defined by the reversal of urban to suburban migration patterns, an extreme concentration and stratification of wealth and power on the one hand and the marginalization and displacement of industry and the emergent precarity of environmental catastrophe on the other. Hartt's often poetic end time imagery of urban sprawl is complemented with the sober and rational commentary by political scientist and author of *The End of History and The Last Man*, Francis Fukuyama. Hartt interviewed him in the summer of 2016 in the lead up to the US election. Fukuyama's voice is underlain by a delicate soundscape of improvised music and diegetic sound. At the heart of his narration are themes central to Fukuyama's research on the history of liberal democracies and their current state of decay with special focus on Europe as an experiment to move towards post-national forms of economy, politics, and identity – an experiment that in the aftermath of the global financial crisis in 2008 has come under threat through the rise of populism and a new emphasis on borders and state sovereignty.

Also included in the exhibition are three sculptures of different scales. All three sculptures take the shape of a ubiquitous, familiar design, which in times of mobile telephony and the internet can still be found all over the US at intersections and mounted to the side of convenience stores. The so-called BN300A Walk-up public telephone enclosure system provides minimal privacy and no protection from the elements and was once specifically designed for extremely high-vandal locations where instrument protection was more important than revenue return. Hartt presents and suggests the telephone booth as an Artifact worth preserving. Along with Fukuyama, Hartt sees the US as a country without a historical sense of self that is still dominated by the ideal of the "frontier", a historically rooted psychological sense of unlimited free land and opportunity – an ideology which in the face of the social and environmental consequences of urban sprawl proves long outdated and even dangerous.

Born in Montréal in 1967, David Hartt lives and works in Philadelphia where he is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the recipient of a 2015 Foundation for Contemporary Art Grant. In 2012 he was named a United States Artists Cruz Fellow, and in 2011 he received a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award. Recently David Hartt has had solo exhibitions at The Art Institute of Chicago (2015), LA><ART, Los Angeles (2015), and Or Gallery, Vancouver (2015). Additionally, his work has been included in several group exhibitions including *Ocean of Images: New Photography 2015* at The Museum of Modern Art (2015), *America Is Hard to See* at the Whitney Museum of American Art (2015) and *Shine a light/Surgir de l'ombre: Canadian Biennial* at the National Gallery of Canada (2014). His work is in the public collections of The Museum of Modern Art, The Whitney Museum of American Art, and The Studio Museum in Harlem in New York, The Art Institute of Chicago, The Museum of Contemporary Art and The Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, and The Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

*(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)*