

### **TIME/LIFE**

Dennis Koch

November 23 - December 28, 2019

Opening Reception: Saturday, November 23, 5:30-8:00pm.

Galleri Urbane is pleased to introduce newly-represented artist Dennis Koch in his first solo exhibition with the gallery. Primarily known for his large-scale colored pencil drawings, *TIME/LIFE* shifts focus to Koch's ongoing series of Cutouts. The body of work is comprised from dozens of vintage *Life* magazines, published in the 1960s and early 70s, whose covers have been meticulously excavated by hand to unveil images below. The resulting objects feature unforeseen correlations between the original cover stories and the culture-influencing contents within, ranging from the light and humorous to the ominous and critical. Through this exercise, Koch draws parallels between the contemporary cultural climate and the equally turbulent events of the 60s and 70s to complicate the idea of a linear advancement of time.

The *Life* magazines used to create the work in *TIME/LIFE* range from the years 1963-1972, a period following a revamp of the publication to compete with television's increasing dominance. Printed in full color and known for its exceptional photojournalism, the then-weekly magazine covered a wide range of topics from the Kennedy administration and the Apollo program to the Vietnam War and Elizabeth Taylor. Koch hones in on this plethora of source material to create a range of juxtapositions. In one work, a cascade of televisions disrupts Henri Huet's famous photograph of army medic Thomas Cole in the trenches of Vietnam. On another, the large mascaraed eyes of a beauty model pierce through a cover depicting Lee Harvey Oswald posing with rifle in hand. Each composition remains open ended, inviting viewers to draw their own meta-narratives from the images and text provided.

The notion of a cyclical passage of time comes through in a collection of six works whose covers have been carved to reveal numerous red *Life* logos. Each portrays a cover-worthy issue of the time, from market troubles to the presidential inauguration. The headlines of these magazines resonate with those published in the present day, another era in which the way Americans receive their news is rapidly changing. An illustration of Vietnam protestors in one work parallel recent moments of social unrest such as The Women's March and protests on climate change. These connections alongside the repeated "*LIFE*" text suggest ties between the present and this bygone era of American history: many aspects of life as it were then continue to remain aspects of life as it is now.

Koch's interest in this concept of time is further emphasized through a wall-sized reproduction of his work that portrays a scene of floating boats from which an array of collaged wrist watches have been carved. The clock hands, tools used to measure the passage of time, are enhanced with LED neon lights. Through this installation and the work in *TIME/LIFE*, one can interpret the idea of time as a fluid medium that ebbs and flows, not unlike the depicted body of water, with archetypal patterns.

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**Dennis Koch** was born in 1978 in Cedar Falls, Iowa. He received a BFA in Studio Art and a BA in Political Science from the University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA. He splits his time between Iowa and Los Angeles. Koch has previously exhibited in Los Angeles with Luis De Jesus Los Angeles, Blum & Poe, Marine

Projects, Happy Lion, Kantor Gallery, High Energy Constructs, Royale Projects, and the Torrance Art Museum, as well as Galerie Zurcher, New York; Galerie Sabine Knust and Kunz x Knust +, Munich, and Miyake Fine Art, Tokyo. In November 2013, Koch was featured as one of 7 emerging male artists to watch in Los Angeles Confidential Magazine.