

CENTURY PICTURES

1329 WILLOUGHBY AVE, NEW YORK, NY 11237

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Roman Signer

Flaschenpost

January 19–April 08, 2018

Opening Reception: Friday, January 19, 2018, 6-9pm

Century Pictures is pleased to announce an exhibition featuring 2 distinct works by Roman Signer alongside a continuously running film documenting many of the artist's performances and experiments.

Roman Signer is an artist who, on the surface, is interested in the kinetic influence of physics on the real world. Known for referring to his studio as a Lab, Signer often falls into the category of "engineer artists" such as Jean Tinguely, and Peter Fischli & David Weiss. His practice has no doubt been influenced by a background as an architect's draughtsman, radio engineer, and a stint in a pressure cooker factory before studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Poland.

Signer's works often document his attempts to capture certain experiments, sometimes spectacular, sometimes mundane, predominately with the backdrop of the natural world. In his documentations, Signer seems intent on quantifying surroundings, allocating resources to fit one's needs, or forcing energy to flow in a predetermined direction, compelled by pyrotechnics or some other mechanical means. More often than not however, Signer, along with the viewer, learns the lesson that in the end, Nature writes the script and we adapt to its changes.

In Peter Liechti's film, *Signer's Koffer- Unterwegs mit Roman Signer (Signer's Suitcase: On The Road with Roman Signer)*, the director has set out to capture Signer in his environment; documenting the artist's experiments within them. A fairly comprehensive mélange of Signer's allegorical investigations, *Signer's Suitcase* runs the gamut from oddly poignant to hilarious, all the while remaining steadfastly unpredictable.

In other work, unpredictability intersects with the constant of time. In *Lauten Auf Dem Fluss*, we see an alarm clock floating on a wood raft on a river. Farcically conveying man's attempts to quantify that which is fleeting, the scene conflates all clichés about time and its passing. Yet the image

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suggests a more profound reading than that of the most obvious comic intent.

In *Flasche (Bottle)*, a bottle miraculously floats midair, seemingly suspended by an ordinary household fan. Can the bottle be rescued? And if so, who will take the prize? Will the contents crash onto the floor and be lost? The drama inherent in this simple slight of hand cues Signer's entire body of work. Simplicity, farce, trial and error, all work against a backdrop of frailty throughout Signer's performances and images. The message, underpinned with a dose of slapstick, laughs both with and at the human condition.

Roman Signer (born 1938 Appenzell, Switzerland) is best known for his sculptural installations and experimental performances. He has exhibited in numerous international museums, galleries, and institutions. Some of his major projects include: Häusler Contemporary München, Munich (2016), High Line Channel 22, New York (2013); Aargauer Kunsthhaus, Aarau (2012); Kunsthalle Hamburg (2009); Rochester Art Center, Minneapolis (2008); Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin (2007); The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh (2007); Kunstpreis Aachen, Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2006); Camden Arts Centre, London (2001); Bonnefonten Museum, Maastricht (2000); Secession, Vienna (1999); Venice Biennale (Swiss Pavilion) (1999); Kunstmuseum St. Gallen (1998); Skulptur Projekte, Münster (1997); documenta 8, Kassel (1987). Roman Signer is represented by Hauser & Wirth.

Century Pictures is located at 1329 Willoughby Avenue in Bushwick, Brooklyn. The gallery is open Thursday–Sunday, 11am–6pm. For more information please visit our website at www.century-pictures.com. The gallery can be reached by phone at (212) 334-7866 or by email at info@century-pictures.com.