

# PAULA COOPER GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **MATIAS FALDBAKKEN**

521 W 21st Street

529 W 21st Street

February 21 – April 6, 2019

NEW YORK—Paula Cooper Gallery is pleased to announce two presentations of work by Matias Faldbakken: a selection of sculptures from his *Screen Overlaps* series (2016) and *FUEL SCULPTURES* (2017) in the gallery's second-floor exhibition space at 521 W 21st Street, and an installation of his earlier work *THE INTERNET* in the vitrine space below at 529 W 21st Street. Both shows will be on view from February 21 through April 6, 2019.

Working with a breadth of materials in painting, drawing, sculpture and video, Faldbakken's art mines the tension between proposition and cancellation, aggression and retreat, and language and illegibility. His aesthetic of reticence and refusal functions as a universal solvent of culturally established meanings and anchors his work in a rebuke of neat binary oppositions.

Exhibited in the second-floor gallery are a number of works from Faldbakken's *Screen Overlaps* series (2016), on view for the first time in the U.S. following their initial presentation at the 2016 Gwangju Biennale in South Korea. Composed of reconfigured readymades ranging from an antique meat grinder to mass-produced plastic furniture, the objects are collided with crude, screen-like plastered surfaces onto which Faldbakken applies a sequence of repeated images. The gesso-like façade with its overlapping pictorial motif suggests various media formats, including application windows on a computer screen, an uncontrollable reiteration caused by malware, or layers of wheat-paste posters and vinyl billboards. Sourcing and re-contextualizing images from advertising, literature, art history, and pop culture, Faldbakken examines how visual information is endlessly multiplied, transmuted and undermined in the illimitable flow of consumer culture and the digital age. Also presented in the exhibition are works from the artist's *FUEL SCULPTURES* (2017). Using funnels, jerry cans and plastic jugs as casting molds for poured concrete sculptures, Faldbakken renders visible the innards of these ubiquitous items, collapsing internal and external forms. Here, the use of unremarkable materials and seemingly indifferent execution challenges traditional modes for generating sculpture.

Presented in the street-level vitrine gallery is Faldbakken's twenty-year-old installation, consisting of solely the words "THE INTERNET" broadcast in a bold graphic font across the wall. Otherwise left entirely bare, the ambiguous interior space allows for a multitude of readings, ranging from notions of authorial veracity and expansiveness to artifice and void. First made in 1999, the prescient work draws greater associations of urgency when considered against the contemporary digital landscape, two decades later. The dissolution of privacy protections, the unabated spread of false news, and the monopolistic power of titan tech companies have become chronically intertwined with all aspects of the global economy, civic discourse, and democracy itself.

Born in Denmark in 1973, Matias Faldbakken studied at the National Academy of Fine Arts in Bergen, Norway and the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main. His work has been the subject of many important one-person exhibitions, including a recent major survey at the Astrup Fearnley Museet in Oslo titled "Effects of Good Government in the Pit" from September 2017 through January 2018. Other one-person exhibitions include Le Consortium, Dijon; WIELS, Brussels; The Power Station, Dallas; Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel; Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen; Kunsthalle St. Gallen, St. Gallen; IKON

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Gallery, Birmingham; The National Museum of Art, Design and Architecture, Oslo. Faldbakken represented Norway in the Nordic Pavilion at the Venice Biennial in 2005 and participated in Documenta 13 in Kassel in 2012 and the 11th Gwangju Biennale in South Korea in 2016. His work is included in important public collections worldwide, such as the Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The National Museum of Art, Oslo; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Jumex Collection, Mexico City; The Ellipse Foundation, Lisbon; and The Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo, and others. Faldbakken is known internationally for his writing, including the novels *The Cocka Hola Company*, *Macht und Rebel*, *Unfun*, and others. His newest book, *The Waiter*, was published in the US by Gallery/Scout Press in October 2018 to critical acclaim and was shortlisted for the prestigious Brage Prize in Norway. Faldbakken currently lives and works as an artist and writer in Oslo, Norway.

For more information and images, please contact the gallery:  
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