

PAULA COOPER GALLERY

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Matias Faldbakken

534 W 21st Street
February 28 – April 5, 2014

NEW YORK -- The Paula Cooper Gallery is delighted to announce Matias Faldbakken's one-person exhibition opening on February 28th. The exhibit, his first at the gallery, will be on view through April 5th.

Matias Faldbakken's work, a combination of iconophilia and iconophobia, is primarily concerned with the various tensions between proposition and cancellation, aggression and retreat, and language and its abstraction into illegibility or absurdity. A frequent characteristic of his work is the use of materials derived from the shipping or construction industries, essential supports of trade and commerce, which he powerfully reintroduces into aesthetic discourse. *Untitled (Ladder Pull)* consists entirely of freight, construction, and mechanical elements that have been jammed, bent, or pulled with applied force. The work expands on a visual language drawn from ideas of transport and exchange, weight and balance, interstitial spaces, and anti-monuments. Intertwined in the ceiling's trestles, a series of three ladders are bent downwards, teetering precariously with suspended ratchet straps tied to concrete traffic barriers. Described by the artist as "halfway monumental," the room-scaled sculpture generates an upward, kite-like thrust at the same time as it exudes a deflationary sensibility. In Faldbakken's words: "I try to suck the air out of the room or de-sacralize it a bit. Fascination should always be balanced with a twist of disappointment."

An interest in the intricacies of articulation and representation extends to Faldbakken's newsprints. Working from the notion of the newspaper as an ephemeral and increasingly obsolete medium, Faldbakken interrogates the boundary between the precious, quasi-sacred quality of the art object and the disposable yet nostalgic nature of the newspaper. The works also speak to the ideas of circulation at play in Faldbakken's "container works" – cans, jugs, lockers, sacks, bags, and other generic vessels for storage and transport that potentially contain goods of some sort. Finally, a framed composition of flattened packing boxes, which evolved out of an encounter with a Joseph Beuys work consisting of a framed olive oil box, further extends the themes of flow, exchange, and value that connect the other works in the exhibition.

Matias Faldbakken was born in Denmark and lives and works as a writer and artist in Oslo, Norway. Faldbakken studied at the National Academy of Fine Arts in Bergen and the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main. In 2005 he represented Norway in the Nordic Pavillion at the Venice Biennial. Recent one-person exhibitions include *Le Consortium*, Dijon; *WIELS*, Brussels; *OCA – Office for Contemporary Art*, Oslo; *The Power Station*, Dallas; *Kunsthalle Fridericianum*, Kassel; *Neuer Aachener Kunstverein*, Aachen; *Kunsthalle St. Gallen*, St. Gallen; *IKON Gallery*, Birmingham; *The National Museum of Art, Design and Architecture*, Oslo. In 2012 Faldbakken participated in *Documenta 13* in Kassel. His work is included in the following public collections: *Jumex Collection*, Mexico City; *The National Museum of Art, Design and Architecture*, Oslo; *The Ellipse Foundation*, Lisbon; *Moderna Museet*, Stockholm; *Malmö Art Museum*, Malmö; *The Speyer Family Collection*, New York; *the Museum of Contemporary Art*, Los Angeles; *The Rubell Family Collection*, Miami.

For more information, please contact the gallery: (212) 255-1105; info@paulacoopergallery.com