

## JOHN RAINEY *STATE SHIFT*

5.11 – 17.12 2022

We are happy to present Belfast-based sculptor John Rainey's second solo exhibition at the gallery, following his introductory exhibition *Playground* in 2019. In this major new solo exhibition, alternative sculptural histories are presented as a series of glitched re-imaginings, manufactured fragments, and botched restorations.

*STATE SHIFT* explores the historical movement of sculptural copies between materials, scales, and geographical locations. Through transformations and material illusions, Rainey reflects on the ability of these forms to shift associations and meanings in different contexts and time periods, with an emphasis on their existence in digital space and time.

While the Roman tradition of producing copies of original Greek sculptures implies repetition and same-ness, Rainey's sculptures take inspiration from the slippages and variations that creep in during the act of reproduction and subsequent restoration. *STATE SHIFT* features five versions of the Discobolus, a sculpture which was copied numerous times (often with distinctive differences) after the Greek master Myron's now lost original. In a British Museum Press publication focusing on the historical flexibility of the Discobolus, curator Ian Jenkins describes that '[t]o Nazi Germany, it was a trophy of the mythical Aryan race [whereas] on a London transport poster for the 1948 Olympic Games ... it was emblematic of the triumph of democratic freedom over fascist tyranny'.<sup>1</sup> Rainey revisits this and other historical forms as well as their shifting meanings through acts of sculptural remixing – where digital scans released by museums are manipulated through a series of transformations and processes including 3D printing, porcelain casting, slicing, re-joining and surface printing.

*STATE SHIFT* presents us with states of uncertainty and disrupted expectations. Existing in a matrix of contradictions, disguise and disruptive patterns, Rainey's re-configurations inject the possibility of alternatives and difference into classical forms usually associated with static ideals.

John Rainey (b. 1985) graduated from the MA Ceramics and Glass programme at the Royal College of Art, London in 2012. He has undertaken residencies at the British School at Rome (Rome, 2018) and Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design (Stockholm, 2013). His work has been exhibited in solo exhibitions at Naughton Gallery, Belfast, Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast, and Marsden Woo Gallery Project Space, London. Selected group exhibitions include EVA International – Ireland's Biennial of Contemporary Art, Limerick, the British Ceramics Biennial, Stoke-on-Trent, Fondation Bernardaud, Limoges, Hunt Museum, Limerick, Oonagh Young Gallery, Dublin, and COLLECT, Saatchi Gallery, London. His work is included in public collections including the UK Government Art Collection and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland Collection.

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<sup>1</sup> Ian Jenkins, *The Discobolus*, London, British Museum Press, 2012, p. 5.

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Vi är glada att kunna presentera den Belfast-baserade skulptören John Rainey's andra separatutställning på galleriet, efter debututställningen *Flayground* 2019. I denna nya utställning presenteras alternativa skulpturhistorier som en serie glitchade reproduktioner, artificiella fragment och misslyckade restaureringar.

*STATE SHIFT* utforskar den historiska utvecklingen av skulpturala kopior mellan olika material, format och geografiska platser. Genom bearbetningar och materialillusioner reflekterar Rainey över dessa formers skiftande betydelser och konnotationer i olika sammanhang och tidsperioder, med särskilt fokus på deras existens i det digitala samhället.

Sedan sin examen från Royal College of Art i London 2012 har John Rainey (f. 1985) bjudits in till konstnårsresidens på British School at Rome och Konstfack. Hans verk har visats i separatutställningar på Naughton Gallery, Belfast, Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast och Marsden Woo Gallery Project Space, London. Tidigare gruppställningar inkluderar EVA International – Ireland's Biennial, Limerick, British Ceramics Biennial, Stoke-on-Trent, Fondation Bernardaud, Limoges, Hunt Museum, Limerick, Oonagh Young Gallery, Dublin och COLLECT, Saatchi Gallery, London. Hans verk ingår i flera offentliga samlingar, bland annat UK Government Art Collection och Arts Council of Northern Ireland Collection.