

BRAND NEW GALLERY

presents

## JOHN KNUTH POWERPLANT

JANUARY 15 | FEBRUARY 22, 2015

OPENING JANUARY 15, 2015 FROM 6-9 PM



Brand New Gallery is proud to present *Powerplant*, the first Italian solo exhibition by Los Angeles-based artist John Knuth. For *Powerplant*, Knuth will be exhibiting two bodies of work: a new group of paintings made with the aid of thousands of flies, and a series of long, slender paintings made by stretching melted space blanket material over mirrored plexiglas.

Knuth's multifaceted work explores themes of transcendence through material manipulation. Through his alchemical process, he transforms seemingly mundane materials into extraordinary objects. His investigative process bridges the disciplines of aesthetics and chemistry to reveal new avenues of perception.

To produce this new group of his now well-known fly paintings, Knuth raised 700,000 flies from the larval stage, feeding them a mixture of sugar and acrylic paint. The flies digest and regurgitate this mixture onto the paintings, leaving millions of flyspeck markings on the surface of each canvas. While it is a chance-based process, Knuth exercises control through the careful use of color and layering of paint. The resulting works reside in a space between minimalism, performance, and conceptual art. For Knuth, they also function as landscapes of his hometown of LA, capturing both the density and sprawl of the city's man-made infrastructure.

With his space blanket works, Knuth's interest in the natural world extends to the theme of wilderness survival. Emergency or space blankets were originally devised to keep people safe in extreme environments. They are metallic silver on one side to trap body heat, and bright red on the reverse, making the wearer visible from great distances. Knuth melts holes in these blankets with signal flares (also used in emergencies), revealing the mirrored plexi beneath. Smooth, serene surfaces contrast with violent ruptures. As the viewer walks around these works, they are confronted with a shifting and distorted reflection of themselves and their surroundings.

### → John Knuth

(b. 1978, Los Angeles, CA) lives and works in Los Angeles, California.

He received an MFA from University of Southern California and a BFA from the University of Minnesota.

Knuth's recent solo exhibitions include *Base Alchemy* at 5 Car Garage, Santa Monica, CA; *Master Plan* at Andrew Rafacz Gallery, Chicago, IL; *Elevated Uncertainty* at Marie Kirkegaard, Copenhagen, Denmark; and *Fading Horizon* at Human Resources, Los Angeles, CA. His works has recently been included in group shows at International Print Center, New York, NY; Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; MassArt, Boston, MA; Self-Titled, Tilburg, NL; Loudhailer, Greene Exhibitions and China Art Objects in Los Angeles.

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#### BRAND NEW GALLERY

via Farini 32, 20159 Milano

t. +39.02.89.05.30.8

from Tuesday to Saturday

11.00am-1.00pm|2.30-7.00pm

[info@brandnew-gallery.com](mailto:info@brandnew-gallery.com)  
[www.brandnew-gallery.com](http://www.brandnew-gallery.com)

PRESS OFFICE

[press@brandnew-gallery.com](mailto:press@brandnew-gallery.com)