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Jay Chung and Q Takeki Maeda

## **Dull and Bathos**

27 August – 26 September, 2015

Screening of *Untitled* (2015) followed by Meet the Artist talk at Kino Xenix: August 27, 7:30pm  
*Untitled* (2015) on view at Kino Xenix: September 3, 10, 17, 24, 4.30pm

Galerie Francesca Pia is pleased to present *Dull and Bathos*, an exhibition of new work by Jay Chung and Q Takeki Maeda. Jay Chung, (b. 1976 Wisconsin, USA) and Q Takeki Maeda (b. 1977 Nagoya, Japan) live and work in Berlin and have collaborated for over ten years, having met at the Frankfurt Städelschule in 2002. Their work explores questions of critique and reference, artistic influence and self-reflexivity. *Dull and Bathos* consists of a short film, *Untitled*, accompanied by a series of Polaroid photographs and *Some Made Up Names*, a large panel work.

To direct *Untitled*, Chung and Maeda commissioned filmmakers Lev Kalman and Whitney Horn, whose feature films have been featured at the International Film Festival Rotterdam and screened at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Their films mix products of popular culture such as teen dramas with the refined sensibilities of avant-garde filmmaking. The protagonists of their latest feature, *L for Leisure*, are American graduate students who spend the duration of the film lounging and relaxing in various locations around the world. Sheltered from any hardship outside of their own anxieties, they are blissfully unaware of their own privilege.

*Untitled* is an improbable blend of Chung and Maeda and Kalman and Horn's respective sensibilities. The film depicts three men on the grounds of a secluded house, lackadaisically playing table tennis. One after another, the protagonists express their dissatisfaction with young artists, calling their work derivative and uncritical. Chung and Maeda's script gives a comically linear form to a century of condescension; each of the three diatribes was assembled from published and recorded interviews from one of three generations of artists. As the historical avant-garde disparaged the artists of the 1960s, so too do the artists of subsequent generations their younger peers.

*Untitled* structures the language of artistic posturing into a contrived whole. Taken individually as nuanced statements about the production of art, the characters' monologues emphasize that art is a cumulative intellectual pursuit, where every gesture or statement augments or contradicts a field of previously validated statements and gestures. In personifying these statements, however, *Untitled* satirically casts doubt on the equally contrived nature of this cumulative field, calling attention to the statements' resemblance to a more typical kind of complaint, the commonplace lament about the deficiencies of the "youth of today."

As a complement to *Untitled*, Chung and Maeda are exhibiting a second work, *Some Made Up Names*. In 2014, Chung and Maeda wrote *The Sixth Year*, a series of short films about the art world. Although the screenplay for the series was adapted from anecdotes and observations recounted by arts professionals in interviews, the films make no reference to real places or people; the names in the screenplay were arbitrarily invented and capriciously assigned. Here in the exhibition space, the complete list of Chung and Maeda's substitute names is shown printed on white panels, representing individuals never heard of, or perhaps as yet unknown.

- *Untitled*, 2015, 16mm transferred on HD, 6'25", edition of 2 + 1AP
- *Untitled (Polaroids by Whitney Horn)*, 2015, polaroid photography, each framed 31.4 x 26.6 x 2.8 cm, all unique
- *Some Made Up Names*, 2015, digitally printed aluminum composite panel, 261 x 184 cm