

MODERNISM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gallery Exhibition Schedule

ALEXANDMUSHI: *Push Me Pull You*

November 8–December 22, 2018

Art attracts us only by what it reveals of our most secret self

—Jean-Luc Godard

Three years ago artists Alex Nichols and Mushi Wooseong James set out on journey of collaboration. What they discovered is that a dynamic tension is core to forging a connection with another person. This tension exists between the desire to be seen and the terror of revealing ourselves.



Two Chairs: Mist in Mulino, Italy

ALEXANDMUSHI's exhibition at MODERNISM presents the ongoing work in their collaboration: Portable Studio, Chair Conversations, Still Conversations, Two Chairs, and The Dictionary. Each work is a seemingly playful exercise of connection and communication. Behind each of these images is the nakedness required by each individual attempting to know another person.

The goal is to better understand humanity. The rule is transparency. Being as transparent as possible is critical. To begin to know someone we have to know ourselves. The practice of collaboration between two artists is the work of knowing the 'other' as a road to knowing the 'self'.

Each project, starting with their first, *Portable Studio*—two strangers in a box with no talking and no touching—begins with a question. How do we communicate without words, or when you are not in the same country, or with words that we define differently? How do we share ourselves? How do we create a space of safety to share?

In the daily practice of collaboration, there is a constant push and pull in meeting minds. The Dictionary project answers the question of how we define words differently. Black phones on pedestals are lined up. Lifting the receiver the listener discovers the words defined personally by each artist and the history each word carries in their experience.

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Portable Studio: Tokyo, 2015

ALEXANDMUSHI in this exhibit share the practice of communicating. How can we create meaningful connections? Two chairs are silently pulled over hills and through fields of mist. Mushi grabs Alex's chair, Alex pulls the chair back. In the absurdity of these actions each artist learns their own boundaries and each others'. Play and humor are essential to the practice of collaboration because what is at stake is the terror of our own being.

"Nichols and James aren't merely observing the world and taking pictures. No. They're manipulating it a bit, directing it, orchestrating it. They're participating in a kind of make-believe that is both ordinary and magical—but it's a dream state that's much more Jean-Luc Godard than Walt

Disney. Pretensions get jettisoned. The people in focus are unmasked, even if they're doing their best to "look the part."

—Jonathan Curiel

ALEXANDMUSHI are 'artists as anthropologists'. Using art systems to isolate different forms of verbal and nonverbal languages across multiple cultures they examine the unifying core forms of communication and connection.

They have exhibited together since 2016 in the U.S., Asia, and Europe. They are the recipients of artist residencies in San Francisco and Taiwan, have guest lectured in the U.S. and Asia, and are the Executive Director and Co-Director of THINK MAKE TANK Artist Collective, an organization dedicated to building a community around collaboration, experimentation, and improvisation.

The public is cordially invited to attend an opening reception on Thursday, November 8th, from 5:30-8PM.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL: 415/541-0461 / FAX: 415/541-0425, OR EMAIL TO: INFO@MODERNISMINC.COM.

HI-RES IMAGES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST.



Chair Conversations: Hanbok. Seoul, 2017

724 ELLIS STREET • SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94109 • (415) 541-0461 • FAX 541-0425
WWW.MODERNISMINC.COM