

ERIC MANIGAUD - Unsettled Areas: 19.02.2016 - 02.04.2016

Eric Manigaud by Lorenzo Pereira on blog Widewalls on February 16th 2016

Eric Manigaud hyperrealistic works in graphite opening at Gallery FIFTY ONE TOO



We don't write so often about artists who create drawings. Simply, there aren't so many artists whose work focuses exclusively on this form of art. Indeed, until recently, drawing was still considered to be a preparatory step in the process of art. Due to its immediate and spontaneous character, drawing was mainly treated as a support for other forms of art. But, in the last four or five decades, a number of artists began to use drawing as a main art form (it was until the late 1960s that various artists such as [Sol LeWitt](#) with his famous wall-drawings used it as a stand-alone art form; and later artists like [William Kentridge](#) and [Ernest Pignon-Ernest](#) who emphasized its expressionistic and narrative characteristics). Eric Manigaud is one of the artists who belongs to a contemporary generation of draughtsmen who are still pushing the boundaries of drawing by underlining their technique, skill and preparation to create. What is unique in the art of Manigaud is the fact that he perfectly uses photography in the process of creating beautiful drawings. How and why? You can see the answer during the artist's upcoming exhibition at FIFTY ONE TOO in Antwerp that is entitled *Unsettled Areas*.



Photography and Archive – The Art of Eric Manigaud

Eric Manigaud is based in Saint-Etienne, France. The work of the artist is presented in a number of museums across the world; it's also part of many private collections. Manigaud is best-known for his extraordinary process, in which he makes large-scale graphite drawings of the agony of the European society. He uses historical photographic archives, and by appropriating these old images, Manigaud transforms them through his particular draughtsman ship and creates captivating, monumental drawings as meta-realities of our recent violent past. Every process begins with an extensive research on those topics that are part of the European collective memory. He is particularly focused on photographic archives dated from 1850s until 1920s (the very beginning of the evolution of contemporary photography), an era when photography was considered scientific and objective.

Before drawing, the artist always proceeds as follow: the selected photographic print is projected in a much larger size than it's original. The enlarged image causes a deviation, which adds an elusive, spectral quality to the image. This large-size projection Manigaud starts to draw continuing for days, avoiding his own shadow while standing in the light of the projector. His almost obsessive drawing practice intertwines a mystical and narrative element to the work. As for the artist, drawings are a more intense version of the realistic properties of his archive and trying to reveal its invisibility.

Unsettled Areas

During the exhibition Unsettled Areas that will be on view at FIFTY ONE TOO, the visitors will have an opportunity to see works of the three different series by Eric Manigaud. The first series is entitled Les Jungles, and it depicts huge jungle interior views of the French expedition to the Ivory Coast at the end of the 19th Century. These works are not exotic representations of the European expeditions in Africa, but hyper realistic representations of horrific remnants of the European colonial past. The second series has a title 1939-1945. With aerial views of bombed cities with crumbled buildings, the artist tries to unravel the historical complex layers of the deconstruction of World War II. Finally, the third series Magde Donohoe and her skotographs reveals the enigmatic characteristic of Manigaud's drawings. Especially for this series, but also with others, the historical archives are usually slightly damaged by creeks, marks of dust. All these additional properties become as important actor as the subject itself.



Eric Manigaud – Hambourg, 1945

Eric Manigaud Exhibition at FIFTY ONE TOO

Unsettled Areas is the first solo show by the French artist Eric Manigaud with FIFTY ONE TOO. FIFTY ONE TOO is an additional gallery space (of the GALLERY FIFTY ONE) opened in 2014, which focuses on the dialogue between all different art media, induced by photography. And the works by Eric Manigaud are perfect examples of amazing art that fuses photography and drawings, thus moving the boundary of contemporary drawing. The show entitled Unsettled Areas will be on view from February 19 until April 2, 2016 at FIFTY ONE TOO in Antwerp, Belgium. The opening is scheduled for February 18, in the presence of the artist.

Featured Image: Eric Manigaud – Hambourg, 1945, detail. Images courtesy of FIFTY ONE TOO, unless otherwise indicated.