

JKG

Hans
Ulrich
Obrist
*Mishka
Who?*

Mishka Henner feat. Duncan Wooldridge
Double Six

12 February - 9 April 2022

Jean-Kenta Gauthier *Vaugirard*



Jean-Kenta Gauthier

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Mishka Henner feat. Duncan Wooldridge

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“On a typically overcast summer’s day in 2014, I trawled the internet looking for something meaningful and came across high-resolution JPEGs of John Baldessari’s *Throwing Three Balls in the Air to Get a Straight Line (Best of Thirty-Six Attempts)*. Such was Baldessari’s influence on my own work that the urge to realign his balls was irresistible. So with heavy grey clouds filling the sky outside my Manchester studio, I did just that.”

— Mishka Henner

Presented from 12 February to 2 April 2022 [extended to 9 April 2022] at the Jean-Kenta Gauthier / Odeon Gallery, the exhibition ***Mishka Henner (feat. Duncan Wooldridge), Double Six*** pays homage to the Californian conceptual artist John Baldessari (1931-2020) and humorously questions how photography and the world can rely on chance.

Rearranging Baldessari’s Balls in a Straight Line (First Attempt) (2014-2021) consists of a series of 12 photographs in which three balls appear perfectly aligned in the air each time. With this set, Mishka Henner (b. 1976, lives in Manchester) appropriates *Throwing Three Balls in the Air to Get a Straight Line (Best of Thirty-Six Attempts)* (1973) by John Baldessari. If Baldessari threw three balls into the air in the hope that the camera would capture them in a straight line in the sky, and then retained the best twelve attempts on his thirty-ten exposure film, in 2014 Mishka Henner spent a few minutes rearranging all the balls in the original photographs into a straight line. Using high-resolution scans and digital retouching software, he fulfilled Baldessari’s wish on the first attempt. But in doing so, he simultaneously destroyed the fundamental idea contained in the work: Baldessari would later claim that the difference between the alignment projected in his mind and the final result was a metaphor for the frustrating gap in any artist’s mind between the conception of a work and its realisation, as well as for chance in creation. In contrast, Henner’s gesture suggests that technology offers the illusion of a perfect world in which Baldessari’s balls are all perfectly aligned and no mistakes are possible. Any idea of chance dear to Baldessari, who himself referred to Marcel Duchamp’s **3 stoppages** (1913-1914) or ‘standards of chance’, is thus reduced to nothing by Mishka Henner.

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Jean-Kenta Gauthier *Odéon*

5, rue de l’Ancienne-Comédie 75006 Paris

Wed - Sat, 2pm - 7pm

***Calming The Storm* (2016)** consists of a one-minute film in which six ships, caught in perilous waves, avoid sinking thanks to a video montage that reduces the swell and stabilises the boats. The title refers to the biblical parable of the miracle of the calmed storm, when Jesus Christ saves mankind caught in the tumultuous waves of their existence and teaches them to have faith. In 1970, John Baldessari wrote: “*Make up art fables. Be a good teacher like Jesus.*” In *Calming The Storm*, Mishka Henner believes in his destiny and makes a video montage that is salutary for the poor ships that we all are: here technology allows for survival, in contrast to *Rearranging Baldessari’s Balls In a Straight Line (First Attempt)*, in which technology seemed to cut off all perspective.

Even if an artist thinks he is God, his immortality would be best assured by a book dedicated to him by Hans-Ulrich Obrist. In 2014, during the opening of an exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London in which Mishka Henner was participating, a friend rushed over to warn him that he had spotted the critic discussing his work with an exhibition curator. The only words he heard were: “*Mishka who?*” ***Mishka Who? (2016)***, lacquer on wood, follows the format and typography of the collection “documents” published by JRP|Ringier and Presses du réel, in which Hans Ulrich Obrist has dedicated a volume to the history of curating. This work by Mishka Henner, as small in size as it is large in its self-mockery, reflects the self-referential world of contemporary art with which the artist has been playing for many years, beginning with a cycle of works appropriating recent canons of art history: Robert Frank, Robert Rauschenberg and Willem de Kooning in *Less Américains* (2012), Gerhard Richter and Ed Ruscha in *Richtered* (2012), Ellsworth Kelly in *Sight Seeing* (2021), and so John Baldessari in the portfolio. With *Mishka Who?*, Henner goes beyond the homage to an artist to insert himself ironically into an art history that sometimes devotes a place to the insignificant and the non-event.

Photo Dice (Zen for Photography) (2020) by artist and curator Duncan Wooldridge (b. 1981 in the UK, lives and works in London), invited by Mishka Henner, questions our relationship to chance and control in photography. These ‘photographic dice’ allow the participant to be relieved of all decisions relating to the technical parameters of the shot: shutter speed, aperture, orientation, depth of field and exposure. The work concludes the exhibition: these dice reintroduce the possibility of play and chance that Henner cancelled out in *Rearranging Baldessari’s Balls In a*

Straight Line (First Attempt), and the visitor will enjoy associating his divine hand with the omnipotence of the saviour in *Calming The Storm*.

On the occasion of *Double Six*, an exhibition that is both contemplative and interactive, we are pleased to announce the release of *Mishka Who?*, a silent artist’s book consisting of 256 empty pages, in contrast with a world awash with technology where commentary and anecdote are elevated to the status of events.

— Jean-Kenta Gauthier, January 2022

Installation views

Hans
Ulrich
Obrist
Mishka
Wbo?



Mishka Henner, feat. Duncan Wooldridge, *Double Six*
12 February - 9 April 2022
Jean-Kenta Gauthier / Odéon, Paris
Installation view (detail)



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Works

Mishka Henner

Rearranging Baldessari's Balls In a Straight Line (First Attempt (2014-2020))



Portfolio of 12 offset prints, 17.6 x 25.8 cm (image) / 24.1 x 32.1 cm (paper) each, on 300 g/sqm paper with round corners
2 justification pages with colophon, edition number and signature, 24.1 x 32.1 cm each
in protective folder with gold foil embossed title, window and flap, 24.5 x 23.5 x 1 cm
Edition of 100 + 10 artist's proofs





overview



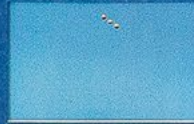
detail



REARRANGING BALDESSARI'S BALLS IN A STRAIGHT LINE
(FIRST ATTEMPT)



MISHKA HENNER 2021



REARRANGING BALDESSARI'S BALLS IN A STRAIGHT LINE

(FIRST ATTEMPT)

REARRANGING BALDESSAR'S BALLS IN A STEP
(FIRST ATTEMPT)

detail

Mishka Henner
Mishka Who? (2016)



Hans
Ulrich
Obrist
Mishka
Who?

Enamel on wood, in artist's frame
21.5 x 15 cm / 23.5 x 17 cm framed

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Mishka Henner
Calming the Storm (2016)
Digital editing by Thomas Harpin



Single-channel video (1 minute 4 seconds loop)
Edition of 3 + 2 artist's proofs



détail

Duncan Wooldridge
Photo Dice (Zen for Photography) (2020)

special version for *Double Six* exhibition



5 engraved dice in custom made boxes, 12.5 x 7 x 5 cm
Signed on the box, with *Double six* special stamp

Mishka Henner, *Double Six*
(feat. Duncan Wooldridge)

12 February - 2 April 2022

Jean-Kenta Gauthier Odéon

800 ISO

10m

Zenith

1/8

f/4.0



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