

BASIM MAGDY :: MEASURING THE LAST BREATHS OF TIME ON A FADING SCALE

18 November 2014 – 13 January 2015

Measuring the Last Breaths of Time on a Fading Scale is the title of Basim Magdy's first solo show at Gypsum Gallery. The exhibition brings together two contemplative works that muse on time as a multi-dimensional space in which the relationship of the present to both past and future is reimagined. It also explores Magdy's relentless preoccupation with stretching the physical and aesthetic limits of analogue film.

In a new suite of photographs, images of subliminal landscapes present an awe-inspiring savage nature. Shot by the artist in various locations, the chromogenic prints are produced from film that has been altered with household chemicals through an elaborate process. Each film stock reacts to specific chemicals in different ways. This manual intervention casts an intoxicating array of hazy, mythical color, and uneven materiality upon the images. Nature, at once a state that occurs in the wild and a force that has been harnessed and cultivated throughout civilization, becomes witness to the inevitable passage of time.

Time Laugh Back at You Like a Sunken Ship (2012) is a short cinematic film shot on Super 8. The film begins with a black screen. A flickering aperture leads our vision to a wild, lush botanical garden enclosed within a steel and glass structure. Much of what we see is mediated through reflections: on foggy panes of glass, moody ponds and a striking mirrored screen strapped to the young male protagonist and through which he encounters his surrounds. Magdy seamlessly mixes audio recordings of nature with melody in an immaculate soundscape that often carries the elliptical narrative forward. In this universe, time is an atmospheric space in which reality, unconsciousness, memories and apparitions harmoniously coexist.

Basim Magdy (b. 1977) is an artist based in Basel, Switzerland and Cairo, Egypt. His current exhibitions include La Biennale de Montreal, Canada; MUMA – Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne and a solo presentation at Art in General, New York. His work has been featured in numerous solo and group shows including the SeMA Biennial MediaCity, Seoul, South Korea, 2014; the 13th Istanbul Biennial, Turkey, 2013; Biennale Jogja XII, Indonesia, 2013; the Sharjah Biennial 11, UAE, 2013; La Triennale, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2012 and Transmediale, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, 2012. He was shortlisted for the second edition of the Future Generation Art Prize, Pinchuk Art Centre in 2012 and is the winner of the 2014 Abraaj Art Prize in Dubai. His film *The Dent* (2014) won the New:Vision Award at the 2014 Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival.