

BLACK BOOK

Gideon Rubin

7 February – 15 April 2018

The Freud Museum is pleased to present **BLACK BOOK**, an exhibition of new work by Gideon Rubin and the latest in a critically acclaimed series curated by James Putnam. Rubin's specially created project for Freud's final residence relates to the era of the late 1930s, when Freud left Vienna for London. It comprises a series of paintings on canvas, linen and paper with subject matter drawn from original pre-WW2 German magazines that Rubin has collected specifically for the project. These magazines contain idealised images of health and efficiency to promote the myth of Aryan supremacy as Nazi propaganda. Rubin has subverted these images in his characteristic style by masking out the faces, Nazi references and swastika motifs. This process relates to our human tendency to block out unpleasant memories from our psyche.



Working on them has been his way to engage with the past on a personal level. He identifies Freud's narrow escape from Vienna in 1938 with his own maternal grandparents' escape from Nazi persecution, fleeing Romania at the last moment in 1939. Rubin situates this imagery within the context of Freud's home. But these seemingly 'innocent' images belie their sinister undertones that allude to the Nazis subsequent mission to exterminate the Jews with Hitler's 'Final Solution'.

Mein Kampf was translated into English and published in London in 1939. Rubin has also acquired an original edition of Hitler's infamous autobiography and has systematically blacked out every page to create a series of abstract monochrome compositions. His systematic blacking out of *Mein Kampf* and the Nazi propaganda images represents a symbolic neutralising and negating of their sinister associations reflected in the exhibition's title: **BLACK BOOK**.

Whilst **BLACK BOOK** strikingly conveys the racial hatred and diaspora of the past, the themes explored are just as relevant to today – from the manipulation and subversion of the media, to racial conflict and war. We are living through a period of intolerance and conflict greater than any period since WW2 with an unprecedented 66.5 million people forcibly displaced worldwide.

The exhibition marks the beginning of the year in which the Freud Museum will commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Freud family arriving in London. Sigmund Freud's escape from Vienna was an international news story in June 1938, and in 2018 the museum will use its archives and collections to explore Freud's status as a refugee in England, while so many others are being made refugees 80 years later.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

About the Freud Museum

The Freud Museum is located within the former London home of Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, and his daughter Anna, a pioneer of child psychoanalysis. The Freud family settled here after fleeing Nazi persecution in Austria in 1938. The centrepiece of the Museum is Freud's extraordinary study, containing his iconic psychoanalytic couch, together with countless books and antiquities. Since its inception in 1986, the museum has developed an international reputation for its collections, research, conferences, events and contemporary art exhibitions. Previous exhibitions at the museum include projects by Sophie Calle, Sarah Lucas, Louise Bourgeois, Tim Noble & Sue Webster, Mark Wallinger and Alice Anderson.

About the Artist

Gideon Rubin (b.1973) is an Israeli artist who lives and works in London. He received his BFA from School of Visual Arts in New York and MFA from Slade School of Art in London. He has had numerous international solo exhibitions, most recent include 'Memory goes as far as this morning: A dialogue between Gideon Rubin and Shu Qun' at Chengdu MoCA, 'Memory Goes as Far as This Morning' at Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art Israel/San Jose ICA (2015/16), 'Questions of Forgiveness' at Galerie Karsten Greve, Paris (2016), 'Delivering Newspapers' at ROKEBY, London (2015), 'On the Road' at Hosfelt Gallery, San Francisco (2013). He received the 'Shifting Foundation' grant in 2014 and Outset residency program, Tel Aviv (2013). Gideon Rubin is represented by Galerie Karsten Greve Paris, Cologne, St Moritz, ROKEBY, London, Hosfelt Gallery, San Francisco and Alon Segev Gallery, Tel Aviv.

About the Curator

James Putnam is an independent curator, writer and former founder curator of the British Museum's Contemporary Arts and Cultures Programme. He has organized a number of exhibitions for major museums juxtaposing the work of contemporary artists with their collections and curated projects for art biennials in Europe and the Far East. Since 1999 has curated an ongoing series of critically acclaimed exhibitions with contemporary artists at the Freud Museum that have included projects by Sophie Calle, Sarah Lucas, Noble & Webster, Ellen Gallagher, Mirosław Balka and Gavin Turk. He is currently Senior Research Fellow for Exhibitions at the University of the Arts, London (UAL).

An accompanying original artwork created for the exhibition will be available to purchase through the Museum.

Gideon Rubin and Sacha Craddock will be in conversation at the museum on 20 February 2018, moderated by curator James Putnam.

Private View: Wednesday 7th February 2018, 6.30 - 8.30pm

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Opening hours: Wednesday to Sunday, 12-5pm

Admission charges: adults £8.00, senior citizens £6.00, concessions £4.00, under 12s free

Underground: Finchley Road. London Overground: Finchley Road and Frognal

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