

Mana Contemporary Presents
David Levinthal: *Pin-Ups*

October 18 – December 30, 2015

Public reception: October 18, 2015, from 1PM – 6PM

Media reception: October 16, 2015, from 11AM – 1PM



David Levinthal, *Untitled* from the series *Pin-ups*, 2015.

For the final chapter of a three-part exhibition, photographer David Levinthal reveals his latest Polaroid portraits of pin-up dolls, continuing his study of toys as representations of American fantasies and realities.

JERSEY CITY, NJ, October 13, 2015—Mana Contemporary is pleased to present David Levinthal's previously unseen *Pin-Ups* (2014). This series is an homage to the work of iconic pin-up artists, such as Alberto Vargas, Gil Elvgren, and George Petty, who glamorized the aesthetic of the so-called "idealized woman" of the 1940s and '50s: shapely, charming, and sensual models whose likenesses were "pinned up" onto bedroom walls and foot lockers nationwide, and most notoriously, on the barracks of American servicemen during World War II. Such classic depictions of the "girl next door" have provided escapist fantasies ever since. The exhibition is located in Mana's second floor gallery.

As in Levinthal's 1990 series, *American Beauties*, the *Pin-Ups* images evoke the subtly inferred sexuality featured in the Noir films of the post-war era. Color prints of 20-by-24-inch Polaroids capture deftly painted ceramic figurines—reminiscent of kitsch ornaments—acting out familiar whimsical scenes.

Levinthal's distinct emotive style and use of a bleak black background gives the rigid dolls a quietly unsettling cinematic atmosphere, asking the viewer to question the innocence of toys. The photographer's ability to create uncanny tableaux, filtered through nostalgia, stirs dialogue on notions of femininity, desire, and cultural stereotypes, among other pop culture commentary.

The previous parts of this exhibition were *Hitler Moves East*, January 11 – April 17 2015, and *XXX: Noir et Blanc*, May 3 – September 15, 2015, both shown at Mana Contemporary.

About David Levinthal

David Levinthal, born in San Francisco in 1949, has been working with toy figures and tableaux as the subject matter for his artwork since 1972. In January of 1997, the International Center of Photography presented a survey of his work from 1975 to 1996. He has received a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, and was named a 1995 Guggenheim Fellow. His work is included in numerous museum collections including the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Gene Autry Western Heritage Museum, and The Menil Collection.

About Mana Contemporary

Founded in 2011, Mana Contemporary is a leading arts destination dedicated to celebrating the creative process. Headquartered in a former tobacco warehouse in Jersey City, Mana unites artists' studios, exhibition spaces, and ancillary services in a single location, facilitating conversation and collaboration among its burgeoning creative community. Together with its sister campuses in Chicago and Miami, Mana serves as a lively center for all members of the art world. Mana Contemporary is home to the Richard Meier Model Museum, Ayn Foundation, the International Center of Photography, The Florence Academy of Art, Gary Lichtenstein Editions, Eileen S. Kaminsky Family Foundation, Armitage Gone! Dance, Keating Foundry, Shen Wei Dance Arts, Mana Urban Arts Project, and many others. For additional information, please visit manacontemporary.com.

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