

FORTNIGHT INSTITUTE

CHRIS OH

PLAYS

December 19 - February 2, 2017

Opening Reception: Monday, December 19, 6-8pm

Fortnight Institute is pleased to present *PLAYS*, Chris Oh's first solo exhibition which draws on the allusion of Old Master paintings and drawings. References to Leonardo Da Vinci, Sofonisba Anguissola, Dieric Bouts, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Caravaggio, Cristofano Allori, Gustave Courbet and the Fayum mummy portraits of Ancient Egypt abound; in Oh's work, these historical images are imitated and re-interpreted on shoes, clothes, sleeping bags, pillow cases, and other wearable, and often discardable, consumer goods.

The resulting works, which are both droll and eerie, trouble our expectations of how art objects – particularly those belonging to the revered annals across art history – should perform. Can they be re-animated? Made illogical? Oh's work, which has immense technical proficiency, courts a strange dissonance: how are we to regard these portraits – da Vinci's "Head of a Virgin," or a portrait of a countess painted by Ingres – on Oh's own towels, napkins, and sneaker insoles? The paintings seem to offer as much a commentary on access as they do on capital and cultural value.

Oh doesn't simply reproduce: he edits and modifies. In his piece "Dirge," which references Caravaggio's elegiac "Medusa" from c. 1595-98, Oh provides the severed Medusa a body (many of his works examine the female subject and protagonist). In "Styx," Oh has allowed the folds of the pillowcase to erase portions of the crying figure of "Mater Dolorosa" by Dieric Bouts; they act at once to mime the tears and erase her already minimal figure.

For Oh, *PLAYS* takes on a double standard: the title references a theatrical production – full of deliberate blocking, staging, and costumery – and its opposite, a kind of playfulness, or surprising joke.

60 EAST 4TH ST. NYC

www.fortnight.institute