

JOHN MILLER
Walking in the City
December 02, 2017 - January 13, 2018

Praz-Delavallade is pleased to announce the fourth exhibition in Paris by New York and Berlin-based artist John Miller.

In this body of work, Miller presents five silkscreen paintings, ten coffee mugs, and a digital slide show, all of which refer to how people inhabit public spaces. He has drawn inspiration from Michel de Certeau's essay « Walking in the City » from his acclaimed book, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, published in 1980.

The silkscreen paintings derive from drawings that Miller made based on photographs he has shot in different locations such as Warsaw, Munich and Palma de Mallorca. Put simply, these are sketches of ordinary scenarios that one might find in many cities. The values in these paintings are very close so as to suggest mirages, hallucinations or after-images.

The center of the space will feature an arrangement of coffee cups. For these Miller photographed commuters from overhead at the new PATH train station at the World Trade Center and had these printed on the cups. He chose this site for formal reasons: the floor of the station is white and thus clearly offsets the commuters as individual figures. Because he shot these images in rapid succession, one finds many of the same figures in different configurations from cup to cup.

In the third part of the show, Miller examines contemporary urban space via an eight-minute PowerPoint slideshow. It is essentially a short-form photo essay that blends together narrative, criticism, appropriation, and poetry. Many of the images are simply blank close-ups of street and sidewalk surfaces, edited in rapid succession. Intercut with these are fragmentary quotations about urban space. Certeau has observed that city can only exist if its ordinary inhabitants, seen as pedestrians, can appropriate and alter it in their own ways. Miller contrasts fragmentary citations from Certeau with those from Erving Goffman, an influential American sociologist who viewed the social world as a theater of conflict and contestation. As the PowerPoint unfolds, the impact of surveillance apparatuses and social control becomes ever more apparent.

Miller's interest in public space began with the photo series *Clubs for America* (1992), which documents the sites of sex clubs in New York City that closed or were closed after the onset of the AIDS epidemic. This investigation led him to his ongoing photo project *The Middle of the Day* (1994 – present) which consists of images taken, between noon and 2 pm., the typical hours of a lunch break. The current exhibition extends Miller's ongoing investigation of the daily realities of economics and social class, specifically by considering digital technology's transformation of public space – through mobile phones in particular. It suggests that photography, rather than augmenting memory, may actually diminish it.

Born in Cleveland, USA in 1954, John Miller is an artist, critic, and musician, based in New York and Berlin, whose work has been exhibited in major museums and collections worldwide. Over the course of thirty years, Miller has produced a diverse body of work that, in addition to figuration, addresses language, valuation, social hierarchy and abjection. He has had solo exhibitions at ICA, Miami (US); Kunsthalle, Zurich (CH); Le Magasin - Centre National d'Art Contemporain, Grenoble (FR); Kunstverein, Hamburg (DE); MAMCO, Geneva (CH); MoMA PS1, New York (US); and Ludwig Museum, Cologne (DE) where he was awarded the Wolfgang Hahn Prize by the Society of Contemporary Arts in 2011. His work was selected for the 1985, 1991 Whitney Biennials, 2005 Lyon Biennial, as well as the 2010 Gwangju Biennale. Miller's work is included in the collections of the Whitney Museum, New York (US); MOCA, Los Angeles (US); Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (US); the Museum Ludwig, Cologne (DE); MAMCO, Geneva (CH); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (NL); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (US); ICA - Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami (US). John Miller is a Professor of Professional Practice in Barnard College's Art History Department, and in Berlin.