

Moyra Davey, *The Revenants*, April 11 – June 21, 2015

Wilfried Lentz Rotterdam is very proud to host the solo exhibition *The Revenants* by artist and writer Moyra Davey (b. 1958, Canada, lives and works in New York.) The title, which comes from the French word meaning 'to return,' refers to Davey's evocation of both literary history and personal history. Inspired by the experimental modernist architecture of the gallery space itself, *The Revenants* represents a continuation of Davey's exploration of the life and work of Jean Genet, the infamous author and playwright who discovered his consciousness as a writer while in prison.

On the fourth floor of the gallery will be the latest in Davey's series of 'mailer projects,' which were included in the 2012 Whitney Biennial. For these methodical projects, Davey folds C-prints into the shape of an envelope, addresses them, and sends them to friends, family and collaborators around the world. The physical journey of the photograph-cum-letter is an essential part of the making of the work itself: when opened and unfolded back into prints by the recipient, the stamps, incidental creases and dings—evidence left by the postal service and the passage of time itself—are unveiled. The process reflects many of the essentials of Davey's practice: a love affair with the small details of everyday life; chance and accident as an artistic strategy (also the subject of much of her own writing); the reclaiming of a slowness that is often lost in the digitized world.

For this iteration of the mailer projects at Wilfried Lentz, the artist has resurrected previously un-exhibited photographs of the abandoned Ohio Penitentiary, taken in the nineties just before its demolition. Davey sent the photographs from New York to Rotterdam over the course of two months. The work is a direct response to the striking, fortress-like architecture of the Justus van Effen complex, the 1920s housing experiment and historical monument where Wilfried Lentz is located. The gallery's series of small, deep-set windows, which Davey has linked through a continuous band of photographs, recall the no longer existent penitentiary and refer to Genet's long history of incarceration. Along with the mailers, fitting nicely into the intimate upper level of the gallery is a new photographic triptych called *Oozing Wall (Rémy)*—Davey's own version of the secret erotic shrine that Genet once kept in his prison cell.

Also on display will be the film *My Saints* (2014), in which Davey asks friends and family to respond to a passage from *The Thief's Journal*, Genet's radical, semi-autobiographical novel that positions writing as an act of self-creation. Speaking openly and with ease from the warm domestic interior that is Davey's trusted working ground, people close to Davey discuss their own experiences of deception and betrayal. *My Saints* reflects the artist's ongoing interest in the intersection between literary and personal biographies, and is a subtle meditation on literature as a vehicle for examining the narrative of one's own life.

Accompanying the show is an artist publication - #9 in the series published by the gallery - with texts by Moyra Davey and Hannah Gregory.

Working across various media, Davey's practice is concerned with the (re)construction of experience through image and language. Recent works, including those presented in this exhibit, focus on the notion of the self as a fiction that is constantly being written and re-written.

Davey's recent solo exhibitions include: Murray Guy, New York (2014), MUMOK, Vienna (2014), Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia (2014) and Camden Arts Centre, London (2014.) In 2012 she participated in the Whitney Biennial and the Sao Paulo Biennial. Her works are included in the collections of many major museums, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Tate Modern, London, and Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid.

The opening and publication launch will take place on Saturday, April 11th, from 5 –7pm and the exhibition runs until June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015. The gallery is open Friday through Sunday from 1 – 6pm and by appointment.

For further information and visuals, please contact the gallery:  
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