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ARIEL REICHMAN

DEAR FELIX, I AM SORRY BUT WE ARE JUST TOO SCARED TO FLY

DURATION: APRIL 27th – JUNE 1st, 2013

OPENING: FRIDAY, APRIL 26th, 2013, 6-9pm

On the occasion of Gallery Weekend Berlin, PSM is proud to present a solo exhibition of the Israeli artist Ariel Reichman. New works will be shown that examine the different forms and possibilities of private and public dialogue.

With the title *Dear Felix, I am sorry but we are just too scared to fly*, Ariel Reichman makes reference to the photographic works *Untitled (Vultures)* by the Cuban-American artist Felix Gonzales Torres, whose work is characterized by the motive of emptiness and the act of disappearing.

Gonzales Torres' photographs from the series *Untitled (Vultures)* show skies kept in grey tones, on which scattered silhouettes of flying birds are subtly revealed. This oft-recurring motive of the bird is generally interpreted as a symbol of hope and a metaphor for freedom in Gonzales Torres' work—the possibility to overcome borders, be it physical, mental or social ones (material or immaterial). The dark monochromatic colouration of the work and the motive of the vulture, however, allow us to question this purely optimistic interpretation.

Ariel Reichman extends these reflections to performative actions. He scanned Gonzales Torres' photographs and reproduced them in a time-consuming hand drawing. Torres' scattered flying birds are absent in Reichman's drawing—only a grey and empty sky remains.

However, the game of artistic references is continued in the work *Untitled (soap)*. An everyday object—a bar of white soap—is presented on a shelf. The original branding in relief on the bar of two flying birds facing each other has been washed away with time and is now almost imperceptible.

Both artworks indicate an attempt of artistic exchange with the model of Gonzales Torres, a great influence to many conceptual artists who have come after him. The work *I am talking with you* also addresses the topic of communication (or the attempt thereof) and opens a new layer of dialogue: the one between artist and viewer. The direct speech remains ambivalent and thus involves a certain critical potential.

The work *Untitled (communication)* amplifies this critical impetus. Microphones installed on poles constantly repeat what the visitors say in the exhibition space. An echo-dialogue is created, leading to doubt the very possibility of in depth communication, not least in the context of present-day exhibition formats and viewer expectations. The work simultaneously sharpens the viewer's attention and invites to another, silent dialogue.