

Shulamit Nazarian Los Angeles



Phillip Maisel, *Jeanne and Claude (3983)*, 2016. Cut archival pigment print. Variation of 3, 28 x 22 inches



Phillip Maisel, *Jeanne and Claude (3943)*, 2016. Cut archival pigment print and neutral density filter. Variation of 3, 28 x 22 inches

Phillip Maisel

Habitat

September 14 – October 28, 2016

Opening Reception: Wednesday, September 14 6-8pm

Shulamit Nazarian is pleased to present *Habitat*, an exhibition of recent works by San Francisco-based artist Phillip Maisel. *Habitat* marks the artist's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles.

While rooted in language of photography, Maisel's practice traverses sculpture, collage, and installation. Never fully resigning itself to a single medium, each piece meditates upon perception, while drawing on the framework of architecture and design.

Maisel selects objects—building materials, studio supplies, and personal artifacts that are embedded with distinct histories of use—and meticulously arranges them into a temporary still life. In the controlled environment of the studio, Maisel photographs the tableau and makes subtle adjustments between each frame by repositioning, introducing, or extracting elements;

he captures each intervention sequentially before finally dismantling the structures. The use of a digital camera provides the artist with an immediate view of the two-dimensional representation, and it is the flattened image, not the objects themselves, that then inform subsequent photographs. Presenting the works in grids and small groupings reveals the nuanced variations within each image.

In many of the artist's new works, a doubling of object and image occurs when Maisel collages the documented materials to the surface of the photographic print. The gesture complicates the relationship between representation and reality, asking the viewer to consider if image and material are distinguishable. At times, the methodology is extended through a physical intervention of surface, as Maisel cuts, bends, and folds the photographic paper.

The exhibition takes its title from the Habitat 67, an experimental residential structure designed by Israeli-Canadian architect Moshe Safdie. Safdie's method of design, both modular and repetitive, correlates with Maisel's working process and iterative compositions. The term also evokes the domesticity of Safdie's architectural space, and that of materials used in the construction of the Maisel's assemblage-images. The root of the word "habitat" means *to possess, or to be situated*, echoing the viewer's process of negotiating the relationship between the pictorial space and the physicality of the artwork's surface.

Phillip Maisel (b.1981, Chicago) received his MFA from California College of the Arts. His work has been exhibited at Gregory Lind Gallery, Right Window, and Southern Exposure in San Francisco; Document and Heaven Gallery in Chicago; The William Benton Museum in Connecticut; The University of New Mexico in Taos; and DeCordova Museum in Massachusetts. His work has been reviewed in *Art Practical*, *Square Cylinder*, and *New City Art*, among others. In 2015, his work was featured in curator Charlotte Cotton's latest book *Photography Is Magic*, a critical publication of contemporary photographic practices.