

# Simon Le Ruez

## Unidentified Friends

19 November 2010 - 22 January 2011

*Simon Le Ruez was the overall winner of CUBEOpen 2009, selected by Leo Fitzmaurice, Sans Façon, Jane Anderson and Andrea Booker. He exhibited sculpture and neon works that were concerned with the urban built environment through their evocation of abandoned piers, bunkers, balconies, buildings and colonies. Le Ruez will be Artist in residence at CUBE gallery for the duration of his solo exhibition this year.*

In a letter dated 1926 the French surrealist artist Claude Cahun wrote 'If it does not upset your plans, would you make it Tuesday instead of Wednesday?' The letter was addressed merely 'Dear Friend', the person unidentified. Later in the letter Cahun quotes from a poem she wrote a few months before 'It does not look true but it is true'.

Simon Le Ruez's practice and recent works could be seen to take a degree of empathy from the sentiment within these words. He is first and foremost a sculptor and installation artist but in recent years his practice has extended to incorporate drawing, video and photography. His eclectic mix of materials and media produce scenarios where themes of longing, concealment, transgression and release are played out, often underscored by dark humour, a knowing impenetrability and an emotional charge.

His recent works might suggest some sort of plan, but like Claude Cahun's proposition in the letter they are simultaneously about its unmaking or changing. A deconstruction is at play and what remains are varying forms of opposition. The continued influence of architecture and urban spaces in the work reveals itself consistently and perhaps most evidently in a new series of works on board, which will be shown in rotation over the course of the exhibition.

'It does not look true but it is true' certainly acknowledges a conflict but again also a strangeness where all is not as it seems. This notion in particular could be applied to the photographic projection work *Mariannenplatz*, where anonymous people have been photographed through a window, their identity further concealed by coloured balls that have been stuck to the window's glass and which always hide their faces. This work sets a rhythm and concern present in many of Le Ruez works, where the viewer is fully implicated in a series of unfolding tensions, where ideas are often explored in relation to particular spaces and where the potential for movement and change is a pertinent one.

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Recent exhibitions of Le Ruez's work include *As Poison Leaks Away*, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, in 2010, *To the King*, (with Maud Haya-Baviera), Collège d'Espagne, La Cité Internationale, Paris, France, in 2009. *The Golden Record*, The Collection, Lincoln Museum, Lincoln, UK, in 2009 and *When the Quarry Calls*, Vane, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, in 2007. He is currently exhibiting in *Beyond the Dustheaps* at the Charles Dickens Museum, London until the 11<sup>th</sup> Dec.

Simon Le Ruez currently lives and works in Sheffield and Berlin.