

## Kristina Kite Gallery

Michael Queenland

*Roam*

S.P.Q.R.: 09/2016 – 08/2017

December 10, 2017 – February 10, 2018

The work for Michael Queenland's exhibition, *Roam*, began in Italy, where he spent the last year in residence at the American Academy in Rome among archeologists, conservationists, historians, and other artists. On daily walks and errands around Rome, Queenland began making a material and visual record that spanned the period of a year. Not looking up at the monuments, but looking down at the ground, the city began to reveal a different story.

Queenland began collecting discarded cigarette packaging he found on the streets, around train stations, restaurants and parked cars, drawn to the antagonistic images used on the packaging as health risk warnings. He soon started collecting other ubiquitous items that any pedestrian would encounter on the streets of Rome. Service stickers advertising trash removal and metal shutter repair stuck onto businesses where those services might be needed. Misplaced grocery lists found on his daily route to the market. Playing cards. Burst balloons. Atop the Janiculum hill, at the Parco di Gianicolo, a lookout point with spectacular views of the historical city center that draws crowds of tourists, young people, and wedding parties, he collected crushed champagne wire tops discarded after a night of celebrating. As Queenland described it, "I could see things slipping into oblivion, objects transitioning from their origins to the landfills outside of Rome in real time." The found objects also began to serve as a temporal and material map of the city.

As his collections accumulated, Queenland scanned the objects and organized the images into categories based on visual, narrative or thematic similarities. From these image albums, which number over 2500 images, Queenland selected various groupings and printed the images onto ceramic tiles, composing panels that reflected his categories, such as cigarette boxes, balloons, and handwritten notes. The printed tiles are interspersed with intricate geometrical patterns of cut marble and granite designed by the artist and which were inspired by the medieval Roman Cosmati mosaic designs found on the church floors of Roman Basilicas, such as Basilica di San Clemente al Laterano. As a gesture towards his fascination with puzzles, Queenland left a few of the panels with the tiles unfixed, giving these pieces a game-like quality.

Discreetly pushed into the corners and edges of the gallery, Queenland included the foam boxes that the marble tile slabs were shipped in as part of the installation. They contain leftover cut triangles and squares of granite and marble. These containers were used during the fabrication of the panels to transport the cut tile pieces from the tile saw to the panels and to organize the different shapes and colors. They are used and dirty and missing edges, taking on the look of miniature stone ruins.

The exhibition also includes a selection of prints from Queenland's 2012 project *Rudy's Ramp of Reminders*, in which he clipped every image of a dead body that appeared in the New York Times over the course of one year. The image is presented alongside the back of the clipping, showing the two sides simultaneously. He also presents three images from his collection of found objects — a puzzle, a wire champagne top, and a balloon with twine.

Michael Queenland was born in Pasadena, CA. He lives and works in Los Angeles. In 2016, Queenland received the Rome Prize and was a fellow at the American Academy in Rome for 2016-2017. He has had solo exhibitions at the Santa Monica Museum of Art in 2012; LA><ART in 2007; and the Institute of Contemporary Art at Maine College of Art in 2005. His work was included in the 2008 Whitney Biennial and he was an artist in residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem in 2004-2005. From 2010-2016, Queenland was Assistant Professor of Sculpture at the Yale School of Art. A catalogue of his work, *Michael Queenland: Photographs, Sculptures and Shaker Classics* was published by the Institute of Contemporary Art at Maine College of Art in 2005. A forthcoming artist's book will be released in 2018 by Midgramme.

Kristina Kite Gallery is located at 3400 W. Washington Blvd. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 11am to 5pm. For images and additional information, please contact [info@kristinakitegallery.la](mailto:info@kristinakitegallery.la).

**in Los Angeles**