

# ESSEX STREET

Chadwick Rantanen

Five Bars of Deal

April 1 – May 17, 2016

Opening Reception: Friday April Fool's Day 6-8PM

ESSEX STREET is pleased to present *Five Bars of Deal*, the second solo exhibition at the gallery of Los Angeles based artist Chadwick Rantanen. The exhibition includes two recently developed bodies of work, Battery Adaptors and Fluorescent Fittings. *Five Bars of Deal* refers to the slats of wood in a man made hive to which bees fix their comb.

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Rantanen continues to investigate the symbiosis between function and ornamentation and the cross-pollination between a discrete artwork and its framing or architectural circumstances. Primarily working in sculpture, Rantanen often combines existing products with hand engineered modifications and add-on components.

Battery Adaptors are a series of electronic adaptor components made by the artist. Some of these adaptors allow the use of an AAA battery in the place of a required AA battery, and other adaptors allow the use of an AA battery in the place of a required C battery. To prove that the adaptors are fully functioning, albeit at lower capacity, Rantanen has installed them in a number of electronic devices, from Cuckoo Clocks to Light Up Picture Frames to Decorative Wall Hangings featuring LED Lights. All of these items normally perform a decorative function in private residential spaces, but in the exhibition are turned around to face the wall, their battery bays exposed. The battery adaptors' dimensional bulk protrudes so far from the bays that they can no longer be hung normally. The Battery Adaptors were designed so that with the application of a different sticker they can resemble Bees, Wasps, or Flies.

Fluorescent Fittings are a series made by Rantanen to slightly lower one end of an illuminated fluorescent light bulb away from its fixture. The sculpture slightly detours the existing electronic circuitry a foot or so. The fittings are made in plastic cases, onto which the application of a sticker can make them resemble a Bee Hive, or as in previous installations a Crab, a Flock of Birds, an Elephant, an Owl, or Fish.

In previous exhibitions, Rantanen has made works using tape measures, coffee mugs, nurse smocks, industrial masking tapes, walker balls, anodizing racks, office tables, tube cutters, hydrographics, welding notations, plastic bins, thanksgiving decorations, telescopic poles and so much more.

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Rantanen was born in Wausau, Wisconsin in 1981. He received his BFA at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design in 2003; attended Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Skowhegan Maine in 2003; and received his MFA from University of California, Los Angeles in 2010. He has recently had one and two person exhibitions at STANDARD (OSLO) in 2014 and 2012; Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago in 2016; C L E A R I N G, Brussels with Calvin Marcus in 2016, and ESSEX STREET, New York in 2013.

Rantanen has recently been in group exhibitions at Tanya Leighton, Berlin in 2015; Lumber Room, Portland in 2015; SculptureCenter, Long Island City in 2014; Overduin and Co., Los Angeles in 2014; The Modern Institute, Glasgow in 2013; United Artists Ltd., Marfa in 2013; and elsewhere.

Forthcoming exhibitions include a group exhibition at the Grazer Kunstverein, Graz this summer and a one person exhibition at Secession, Vienna next year.

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