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Ordovas
25 Savile Row W1S 2ER
Open: 10am-6pm Tue-Fri and 11am-3pm Sat

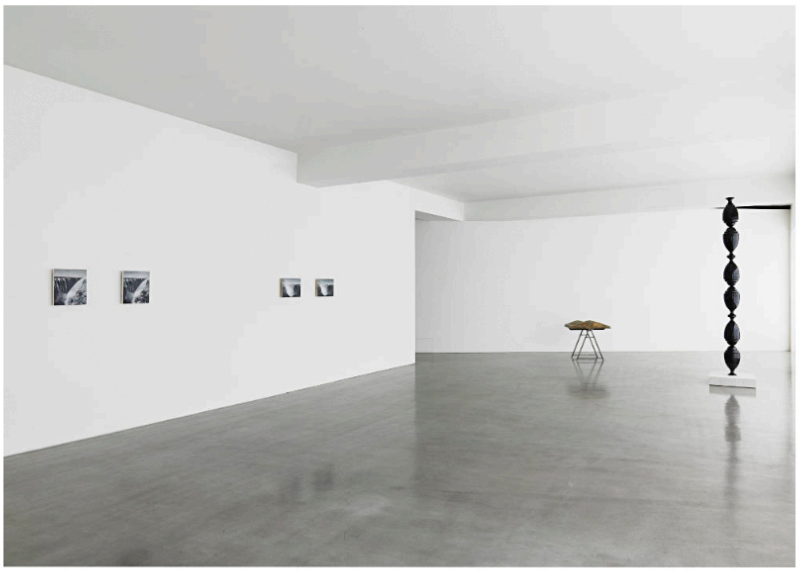
Visit

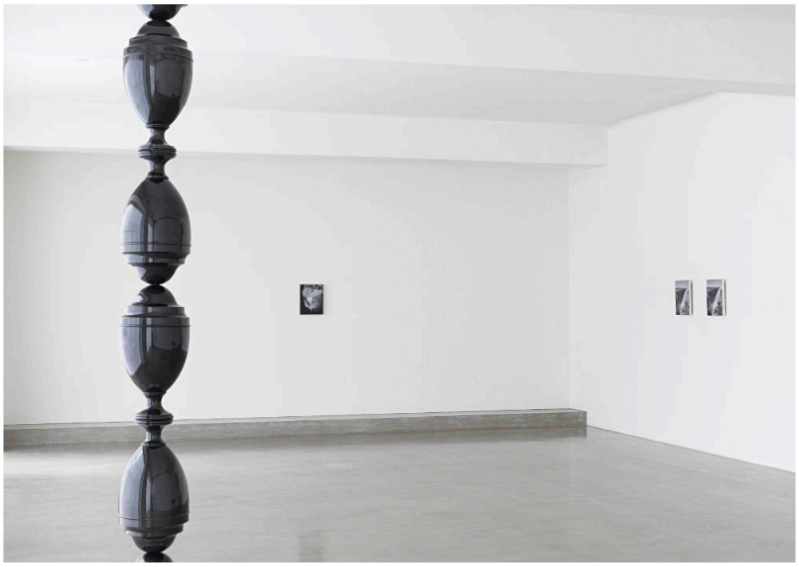
Aleksandar Duravcevic: Memory Keeper

Fri 9 Jun 2017 to Sat 29 Jul 2017

exhibition

Memory Keeper **is a selection of painting, sculpture and film by Aleksandar Duravcevic that explores storytelling and recollection through ideas of identity, repetition and the passing of time.**





This exhibition is the gallery's second dedicated entirely to the work of a single, living artist and the first major presentation of Duravcevic's work in the United Kingdom.

"Working with living artists as well as our historical exhibitions are both very important parts of what we do – our programme is academic, curated and also very personal," says Pilar Ordovas.
"I have recently enjoyed working with Frank Auerbach, Damien Hirst, Not Vital and now, for our exhibition this summer, with Aleksandar Duravcevic. I first came across his work through a friend and went to see his pavilion for Montenegro at the Venice Biennale in 2015. I was really taken with the beauty and intimacy of his drawings and later I discovered his paintings, sculptures and films."

The works included in *Memory Keeper* have been carefully assembled to narrate the artist's own experience growing up in wartime Yugoslavia, fleeing the country as a refugee to Italy and later emigrating to the United States. The exhibition transports visitors through the artist's personal history, while also inviting them to make their own connections – using his visual memories to relate to their own. Duravcevic's work invites close inspection, and often reconsideration. Elements that at first attract may raise unsettling questions about their histories, while those that disturb may be rooted in fond memories.

For the two *Double Life* diptychs, 2017, each panel is scaled and prepared in exactly the same way as Byzantine icon paintings. The found image of a double rainbow above Victoria Falls, seems at first something spectacular and rare, as if a glimpse of a magical natural happening has been recorded. However, this is a common sight above the waterfall. The extraordinary as an everyday occurrence questions how each of us sees and catalogues images and memories differently from one another, even if we think we share an experience. Each panel depicts the same colourless scene of two rainbows above the momentous waterfall; the paintings are inevitably slightly different, showing the hand of the artist as well as exploring the idea that neither memory, nor reproduction of a memory, can ever be the same as the real thing.

In contrast to the black and white rainbows, the glittering purple lacquer of *Monument to the unknown hero*, 2016, questions the purpose of colour and its place within our personal collection of memories. *Touch me not*, 2017, a book in stone, open at the centre, has no words or pictures to illustrate its contents: only the natural grain of the travertine stone tells the story. For *Waiting*, 2015, Duravcevic filmed an old woman sitting outside her home in traditional Montenegrin dress. With a mind full of private wonderings and a life of her own personal experiences, she surveys her surroundings, guarding not only her home but also her silent thoughts.

Aleksandar Duravcevic was the 2015 representative of Montenegro at the 56th Venice Biennale. The artist is a recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts grant and his works are in the permanent holdings of major private collections and public institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Brooklyn Museum, New York, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA, and Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA.

Memory Keeper is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with essay contributions by Xavier F. Salomon, Chief Curator of The Frick Collection, Phong Bui, Co-Founder and Artistic Director of The Brooklyn Rail, and an introduction written by Pilar Ordovas.

Courtesy of Ordovas, London