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JASON COVERT: *Excavation*

MAY 16 – JUNE 8, 2014

Opening reception: Friday, May 16, 6:00-8:00 PM



New York, NY (April 30, 2014) Hionas Gallery is pleased to announce *Excavation*, the forthcoming solo exhibition by multi-media artist Jason Covert, his second with the gallery. Covert will premiere a series of photographic self-portraits, three mixed-media concept sculptures (blood, human ashes, and his own headstone), and the short film, “Excavation,” which will be screened at half-hour intervals on opening night. *Excavation* is the latest in Covert’s specially curated bodies of work in which he is the creator and key player, and each piece is a building block for his mythologized family history.

In the artist’s own words, Covert traffics “in the concept of loss and its impact on the human condition.” Undoubtedly these explorations have led him down some sinister roads. In this instance, we see a man delving into the darkest corners of his subconscious and unearthing capsules of regret, hope, and profound loss, all cathartic in their own peculiar way. For “Excavation,” the artist’s first short film, we bear witness to a man consumed by an unusual routine. Portraying a version of himself (or several versions), Covert begins each day with a clear sense of the steps that will comprise the routine, yet not a clue of where each will lead him. He is following a map without a true beginning or end.

The historical anecdote goes, some indigenous cultures of the Americas once believed that the photographic process could steal away one's soul, and that is was disrespectful to the spiritual world. What knowledge can be derived from these tales when placed in the context of an artist whose self-portraiture is, in a sense, an autopsy of his own psyche? Is his motive to preserve the soul, cast it away, or do something else with it entirely?

Excavation is a continuation of two preceding bodies of work, *Time of Men* and *The Bridge*, in which the artist uses his lens to perform a séance and write new chapters in his family's history. Covert has proved himself adept at thoroughly erasing the line that divides fact and fiction. This becomes apparent through his role-playing, his ancestral narratives, and the manner in which he nearly exsanguinates himself to create a self-portrait. While some precedents do exist, particularly in the work of David Wojnarowicz and Cindy Sherman, *Excavation* is truly without equal.

The opening reception for *Excavation* will take place on Friday, May 16, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. For more information visit www.hionasgallery.com.

About the artist:

Jason Covert was born on May 16, 1974. He lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

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