

METRO PICTURES

Alexandre Singh: *A Gentle Horror*

October 11 - November 9, 2019

Opening reception: October 11, 6pm to 8pm

Press preview followed by a Q&A with the artist: October 11, 5pm

Alexandre Singh presents the New York premiere of his debut short film, *The Appointment* (2019, 19 min), in *A Gentle Horror*, the artist's first major exhibition at Metro Pictures. Singh's installation transforms the gallery into an abandoned cinema from an imagined dystopic future. With trompe l'oeil wallpaper and flooring that is painstakingly hand-drawn, the exhibition includes sculpture and paintings that refer to the macabre vernacular of the film. Together, the works further the ideas around narrative and storytelling he first began exploring in 2007 with his Faustian novella, *The Marque of the Third Stripe*.



A darkly comic thriller, the film is a tale of doubling and mistaken identity that embraces the fantastical and supernatural qualities of Gothic literature, from E. T. A. Hoffmann to Roald Dahl. The protagonist is Henry Salt, an enfant terrible of letters, whom we meet as he wakes from a nightmare and discovers a confounding entry in his diary: "12 o'clock at the restaurant La Folie." But whom is Henry meeting? And why doesn't he remember making this appointment? When no one appears at the scheduled time, Henry becomes obsessed with trying to uncover this person's identity. Charging through a series of dreamlike encounters, he discovers that the truth is more disturbing than he could have possibly imagined.

The five new bronze sculptures on view are cast from reworked film props Singh designed using found kitchen utensils. Like anthropological specimens from a post-apocalyptic world to come, these strange insect-like creatures sit frozen atop pedestals of detritus, piles of pasta, popcorn, and packing peanuts. Inspired by Japanese filmmaker Hayao Miyazaki's characters, the black and white paintings in the exhibition are portraits of surrealist sculptures that seem to have come to life.

Screenings of *The Appointment* will begin on the hour, starting at 10am, and will run every 20 minutes. The film stars Samuel Crane and David Bamber, and was produced by art historian Natalie Musteata in collaboration with EMU Films, London. An original score was written by the Dutch composer Gerry Arling. It is on view through April 12, 2020, in Singh's exhibition *A Gothic Tale* at the Legion of Honor Museum, San Francisco.

Born in 1980 in Bordeaux, France, Alexandre Singh works in a wide range of media, including installation, performance, literature, collage, and video. His theater play *The Humans* was developed by Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, and toured to the Brooklyn Academy of Music as part of Performa 13, 2013, and the Festival D'Avignon, France, 2014. Singh's work has been the subject of one-person presentations at White Columns, New York; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; and The Drawing Center, New York, as well as numerous group exhibitions throughout Europe, Asia, and North America, including the Lyon Biennial and Manifesta 8. His collaborations include *Hello Meth Lab in the Sun* at the Ballroom, Marfa, Texas, and *UNCLEHEAD*, with Rita Sobral Campos, at the Museu da Eletricidade, Lisbon.

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Image: Still from Alexandre Singh's *The Appointment* (2019, 19 min).