

GAZELLI ART HOUSE



© Claudia Hart, *The Ruins*, 2019.

Claudia Hart *An Imaginary Ruin*

Exhibition: 3rd December, 2020 - 17th January, 2021

#ClaudiaHart

Gazelli Art House welcomes Claudia Hart to ‘takeover’ the Dover Street gallery’s new lower ground exhibition space with her artwork *The Ruins*; launching on 3rd December for its London premiere. The physical exhibition will be installed until 17th January, alongside an extended viewing of a digitized version which is sited in a two-story scale model of Gazelli Art House, London; a parallel universe created by Hart in Mozilla Hubs. Although the Mozilla Hubs work should be considered an extension of the bricks and mortar exhibition on Dover Street it is in fact an autonomous piece entitled ‘*An Imaginary Ruin*’ by the artist in a nod to the visionary prisons of the 18th century Italian architect and archeologist Giovanni Piranesi.

The Ruins implements still lifes, the classical form of a memento mori, to contemplate the decay of Western civilisation. In this exhibition, Hart revises the canons of modernist painting and the manifestos of failed utopias. Exhibited works are meditations on the flow of history, expressed as a cycle of decay and regeneration. *The Ruins* is an antidote to a world in crisis, navigating from a Eurocentric paradigm of fixed photographic capture into a reality of malleable and inherently unstable computer simulations and systemic collapse.

The Ruins, the central artwork from which the exhibition gains its title, is an audiovisual animation tracking through a claustrophobic game world from which there is no escape. As the three-channel maze unravels, Hart introduces her newest interpretation of still lifes—low-resolution polygon models. These models, hearkening to the idea of a poor copy or image popularised by Hito Steryl, are computer-made replications of

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copyright-protected paintings. Taken from works by Matisse and Picasso, patriarchs of the Modernist canon, these forms cover *The Ruins* in flirtatious copyright infringement. Copyright marks the beginning of Modernism as a response to the emerging technology of photography. Music composed by Edmund Campion furthers the ethos of modernism through the tactical mixing of failed Utopian ideologies: Thomas Jefferson *On American Liberty*; *The Bauhaus Manifesto* by Walter Gropius; *Fordlandia*, Henry Ford's failed suburban rubber plantation in the Amazon rainforest; and Jim Jones's sermon, *The Open Door*. Campion has processed and mixed each recording read by the artist, using Hart's voice as an instrument that serves as the soundtrack to both the animation and the exhibition itself.

On 16th December Gazelli Art House Founder Mila Askarova and Hart will host a digital Remo "walk through" in the custom-made space and will discuss the artwork. The pre-recorded discussion will be filmed in a *Cinéma Vérité* style from which the viewers will gain an authentic insight into the Hart-curated VR world. The event will be held in cooperation with the real-time engagement platform Agora Digital Art.

About the Gallery

Gazelli Art House is a commercial gallery with a wide range of international artists, presenting a broad and dynamic programme to a diverse audience through global public projects and exhibition spaces in London and Baku. Gazelli Art House was founded in 2003 in Baku, Azerbaijan where it held exhibitions with Azeri artists. Having hosted conceptually interlinked off-site exhibitions across London, founder and director of Gazelli Art House, Mila Askarova, opened a permanent space on Dover Street, London in March 2012. In 2017, the redesigned gallery space reopened in Baku, with an ambitious annual program showcasing both local and international artists. Representing artists Aziz+Cucher, Derek Boshier, Stanley Casselman, Francesco Jodice, Recycle Group, Kalliopi Lemos, Niyaz Najafov and Giovanni Ozzola amongst others, the gallery has built a consistent and diverse program with artists working in sculpture, photography, painting, video, performance and virtual reality.

For further press information, images and requests please contact: press@gazelliarthouse.com