

# bitforms gallery

**Jonathan Monaghan**

***Escape Pod***

**Mar 22 – May 3, 2015**

bitforms gallery: 131 Allen Street, New York NY 10002

**Reception:** Sunday, Mar 22, 4:00 – 7:00 PM

**Artist Talk & Screening:** Thursday, Apr 2, 7:00 PM

**Gallery Hours:** Wed – Sat, 11:00 AM – 6:00 PM; Sun 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM

bitforms gallery is pleased to announce Jonathan Monaghan's first solo exhibition in New York. Based in the U.S., Monaghan crafts surreal and psychologically driven works that operate within the real, imagined and virtual worlds. He builds absurdist 3D environments that contain compelling objects, often pulling from populist sources, such as historic architecture, religious iconography, design, science fiction, and advertising.

*Escape Pod* is an exhibition that features Monaghan's new video installation of the same name, as well as recent prints created in a process of computational collage. Conceived of as an ambitious and dreamlike HD animation, *Escape Pod* has been in production for several months, and was created with commercial animation software. It builds on a rich visual vocabulary of his past works, which will also be presented at the gallery in a special one-night screening.

*Escape Pod* is based on hunting mythologies of the Greek and Nordic traditions. It captures the journey of a golden stag that roams modernist spaces of authoritarian confrontation and material excess. Lavish bedrooms, airport checkpoints, and a luxury riot gear boutique are encountered, as the scenery unfolds from the perspective of a floating viewpoint that is framed as a continuous shot. In a climatic moment, the golden fawn is birthed out of a BoConcept sofa, only to be carried away, into a heavenly Duty Free shop in the clouds. Seamlessly looped in a twenty-minute cycle, *Escape Pod* suggests an apocalyptic decadent future – one that is militarized, totalitarian and permeated by extravagance. It is a representation of laboured pursuits, particularly of the otherworldly or unobtainable.

Also a New York debut, *After Fabergé* is a series of five-foot photographic prints that combine the experience of consumer technology and luxury goods. Mashing anatomy and design, these highly detailed compositions evoke alternate realities, if not fetishistic obsessions. The eggs are ornamented with human orifices, industrial vents, USB plugs - and even a Starbucks coffee shop. Resplendent in decorative detail, and enveloped by stark white backgrounds, their appearance is evocative of commercially functional products. Yet, each egg lacks a specific purpose, which causes these virtual objects to hold a strange and ominous power.

The imagery of *After Fabergé* reappears in *The Pavilion*, an animation with a new age soundtrack that conflates the ostentation of Baroque architecture, a walk-in closet, and the folds of a gigantic anus.

## **Concurrent and forthcoming projects with Jonathan Monaghan**

Apr 10 – May 3, 2015. "Myth and Mutations", group show at REVERSE, Brooklyn

## **Biography**

**Jonathan Monaghan** (b. 1986, New York, NY) is an emerging artist whose past exhibitions and screenings include the British Film Institute, London; the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C.; Crystal Bridges Museum, Bentonville, AR; Rotterdam International Film Festival, the Netherlands; Fe Gallery, Pittsburgh; Shanghai Duolun Museum of Modern Art, China; Vox Populi, Philadelphia; Contemporary Art Centre of Thessaloniki, Greece; the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Art, Brooklyn; George Mason University, Fairfax; bitforms gallery, New York; Curator's Office, Washington D.C; Market Gallery, Glasgow; Artisphere, Arlington; and the Queens Museum of Art, New York.

**bitforms gallery** was founded in 2001 and is devoted to emerging and established contemporary artists who embrace the visual discourse of new media culture.

For images and more information on the exhibit, please visit [www.bitforms.com](http://www.bitforms.com) and [www.jonmonaghan.com](http://www.jonmonaghan.com).

For publicity requests, please contact gallery director Laura Blereau, [laura@bitforms.com](mailto:laura@bitforms.com) or call (212) 366-6939.