

ROMAN ROAD

PRESS RELEASE *ALTERED*

Exhibition:
Saturday 13 January - Saturday 10 February 2018

Opening Hours:
Wednesday – Friday, 10am – 6pm
Saturday, 12pm – 5pm and by appointment

Roman Road is pleased to present *Altered*, a group exhibition featuring works by Alix Marie, Daisuke Yokota, Gita Lenz and Marie Orensanz. Bringing together varied sculptural and photographic pieces, the show looks at how these international artists have probed the realms of the abstract and the surreal through explorations of human experiences, ontology and the everyday.

The exhibition begins with a sculpture by Alix Marie on the floor by the gallery entryway. Her *Femme Fontaine / Feet* (2016) is a concrete cast of two feet displayed together in a criss-crossed form. The tops of the feet appear to have been roughly severed, mimicking the display of broken statues from antiquity. Marie's practice is rooted in her investigations of bodies and their representation; her works often show the human body in a disjointed form, drawing on a tradition of fragmentation that comes from classical sculpture and at once reinterpreting the sculptural object.

Featured on the adjacent wall is a collection of photographs from Daisuke Yokota's *Taratine* (2015). An ode to his girlfriend, these intimate, close-up images of the most important women in his life are often blurry with visible grain or printed with smut strewn across the surface, materialising an unexpected depth and tactility. The exhibition also includes a work from Yokota's *Matter/Burn Out* (2016) – a series of highly abstract photographs that capture his process of setting fire to installation prints in an abandoned construction site – as well as an unique, experimental photograph made by the artist's hand.

A single, framed black and white photograph by Gita Lenz occupies the opposite wall and shows the late photographer's interest in forms and shapes, both natural and manmade. During her active years as an artist, primarily the 1940s and 1950s, Lenz moved from street photography into more abstract, surreal compositions, creating contemplative images inspired by day-to-day encounters.

Altered also presents a selection of drawings by Marie Orensanz on broken remnants of marble. Her pieces consist of minimalistic and diagrammatic compositions with neatly written and scattered words, and often blocks of colour. Her indecipherable drawings, spreading from one work to the next, point to a connective yet ambiguous transformation, and investigate conceptual ideas of abstraction.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Gita Lenz (b.1910–2011) was an American photographer whose work, ranging from New York street photography to Abstract Expressionism, engages with the surreal and process-based art. She was most active from the 1940s to the early 1960s, during which she created an oeuvre that withstands comparison to many influential photographers of the time. In the 1950s, Lenz's work was presented in two seminal photography exhibitions curated by Edward Steichen for the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), including *Abstraction in Photography* (1951) and *Family of Man* (1955). She was also featured in the three-person show *The Third Eye* (1952) at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, alongside John Reed and Don Normark. Lenz's work has more recently been receiving new recognition; in 2010, Candela Books published a first monograph titled *Gita Lenz: Photographs* in conjunction with an exhibition of her vintage prints at Gitterman Gallery in New York.

Alix Marie (b.1989) is a French artist based in London, working across the mediums of photography, sculpture and installation. She graduated from Central Saint Martins College in 2011 with a first class honours degree in fine art and later completed an MA in photography at the Royal College of Art, where she received a distinction for her dissertation work about photography and fetish. Her work explores our relationship to bodies and their representation, through processes of objectification, fragmentation, magnification and accumulation. The photograph is considered as object and she continues to take her practice forward into new directions by investigating its potential for materiality and three-dimensionality. Since 2009, Marie has been featured in exhibitions internationally and she has recently taken part in the artist residencies *Fresh Winds* in Garður, Iceland and *Void* in Athens, Greece. She was selected for the 11th edition of Foam Talent Call and her work is currently featured in the travelling *Foam Talent* exhibition that launched in Amsterdam on 31 August 2017. Her first publication *Bleu* was also released last year with Morel Books. In 2018, Marie will have a solo show as part of the Düsseldorf Photo Weekend after winning the prestigious 2017 Portfolio Review Award.

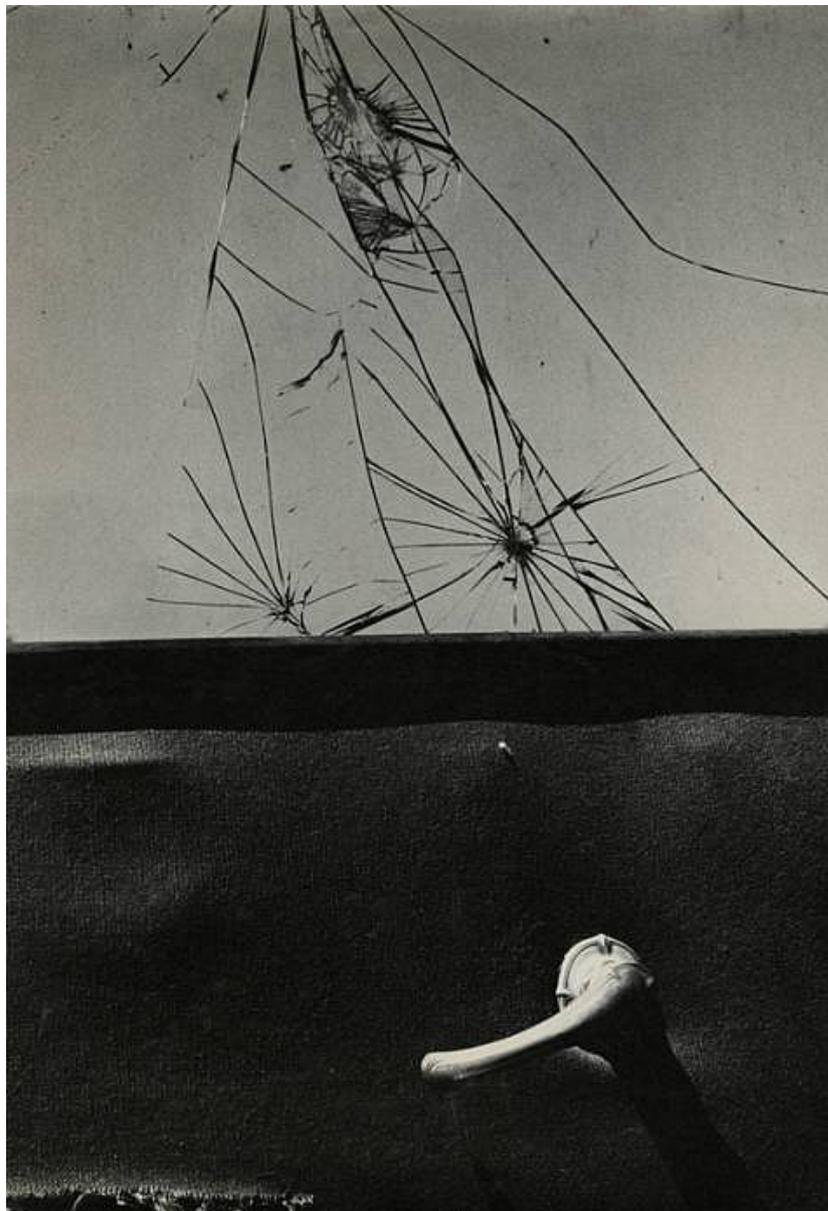
Marie Orensanz (b. 1936) is an Argentinian artist living and working in Paris. She began her career studying painting in Buenos Aires under Argentinian Modernist masters Emilio Pettoruti and Antonio Seguí. In 1972, Orensanz moved to Milan and began working with sculpture after discovering the Carrara marble quarries. It was here that she developed her unique sculptural language, utilising found fragments of marble to explore concepts of incompleteness, symbolism and the relationship between linguistic and visual modes of representation. These ideas were drawn together in Orensanz' 1978 "Manifesto of Fragmentism," in which she explains the conceptual basis of her work and develops her preoccupation with the fragment as the basic unit of her artistic production. Over the past decades, Marie Orensanz' work has been shown internationally in solo and group exhibitions. She received a retrospective at Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires (MAMBA) in 2007, and has had solo shows at Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Rosario, Argentina; Maison de l'Amérique Latine, Paris, France; and Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Her work is held in collections worldwide, including at Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France; Centro de Multimedia Internacional, São Paulo, Brazil; Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France; and Bremen Museum, Germany.

Daisuke Yokota (b.1983) is a Japanese artist who majored in photography at the Nippon Photography Institute in Tokyo. As the winner of the first Outset | Unseen Exhibition Fund at the Unseen Photo Fair 2013, he presented a solo exhibition at Foam Photography Museum in Amsterdam in 2014. In the same year, his book *Vertigo* (Newfave, 2014) was shortlisted for the Paris Photo - Aperture Foundation PhotoBook of the Year award. In 2015, Yokota was featured at Shashin Festival: Photography from Japan (New York), and participated in *In the Wake: Japanese Photographers Respond to 3/11* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston); *Another Language* (Rencontres d'Arles, Arles); and *Trans-Tokyo / Trans-Photo* at the Jimei x Arles: East West Encounters International Photo Festival (Xiamen, China). His works are included in the collections of the Foam Photography Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the SFMOMA. In 2016, Yokota received the prestigious Foam Paul Huf Award and recently presented his solo exhibition *Matter* at Foam Photography Museum.

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Roman Road was founded in 2013 by Marisa Bellani and initially began as a project space. The peculiarity of the premises has had a direct impact on the gallery's programme since its beginning. Tall and with a small footprint, the space led the director to challenge artists to employ the architectural elements in order to develop or restructure a body of work. Artists have frequently been asked to use the exhibition as a medium and have managed to transform the gallery room into a unique work of art. In 2014, the building underwent refurbishment to instate an additional private viewing space that gathers varied works by the gallery's represented artists, which are viewable by appointment. Since completing this renovation in 2015, Roman Road has established a qualitative programme, including participations at art fairs, and has seen its represented artists become internationally recognised by institutions and collectors.



Gita Lenz, *Automobile Door Handle and Cracked Glass*, late 1940s-1950s. Silver gelatin print.