

ULTERIOR

Takashi Kunitani

Pink Objects

April 8 – May 7, 2017



Untitled (VINTAGE), 2017

Neon tubing, glass, steel, cord, and transformer
61 ¾ x 31 ½ x 13 ¾ inches / 157 x 80 x 35 cm

Ulterior Gallery is pleased to present *Pink Objects*, the first U.S. solo exhibition of Takashi Kunitani's work. The exhibition opens on Saturday, April 8 with a reception for the artist from 6 to 8 pm.

Eight of Kunitani's pink neon light sculptures will transform the main gallery space into a "conceptual porn site." The eight sculptures form words culled by the artist from various online porn sites. These words are laid flat on glass shelves at eye level so they appear to be pink objects, making the words illegible at first glance. Only when the viewer bends down and looks at the objects from below, mimicking a taboo action, do the forms become readable from underneath the glass shelf. By placing the neon letters in this orientation, Kunitani creates a situation in which the sculptures are purely formal constructs when viewed licitly or in an "upright" posture. Only when we go looking for them do we see the letters and construe their meaning. Context changes the perspective. And by his placement of the installation, Kunitani poses yet another perspective: from outside the gallery, passers-by will see viewers bending down to look at the words, turning the spectators into one more spectacle.

The argon in the tubes, like the words laid flat, needs human interaction to become observable. The color and the light only become visible when electricity is sent through the tube. What the viewer

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sees in these sculptures is an ephemeral chemical response. Kunitani's *Spaceless Space* in the back room explores the ephemerality of the viewer's relationship with artworks and space. To make this work, Kunitani blew into a glass tube, deforming it and rendering it a unique object that captured his breath. He considers these works to be activators of the space in which they are enacted rather than works of art of their own.

Takashi Kunitani was born in Kyoto, Japan in 1974 and graduated from Seian University of Art and Design in Shiga Prefecture, Japan in 1997. After completing his bachelor's degree in fine art, to pursue his sculptural language he apprenticed at a traditional neon sign craftman's studio; this one-on-one training equipped him to him to freely form and deform glass. Kunitani's works have been the subject of numerous solo and group exhibitions, including: *Takashi Kunitani: Deep Projection*, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art, Hyogo, Japan (2015); *Two Passages*, Nuit Blanche Kyoto 2012, Kyoto Art Center, Kyoto, Japan (2012); *Today's Artist 48: Takashi Kunitani—The Vertical Horizon*, Osaka Contemporary Art Center, Osaka, Japan (2007); *Criterion 54: Takashi Kunitani*, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki, Japan (2003). He lives and work in Kyoto.

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