

## 24 JANUARY – 11 MARCH 2018

### MICHELLE LOPEZ

### HOUSE OF CARDS

Simon Preston Gallery is delighted to present Michelle Lopez' fourth exhibition at the gallery, a new sculptural installation comprising of an intricate framework of interlocking steel rope, wrapped lead scaffolding and suspended glass columns. Continuing the artist's interest in the tension of deflated forms, this fragile *House of Cards* is at once tenuous and impoverished, re-imagining by hand the apparatus intended for real estate construction, and imbuing these often subsidiary forms with collapse and entropy.

Lopez has evolved her leaning wall sculpture towards a free-standing, Arte Povera-inspired assemblage that is materially defiant and contradictory. In this instance, twisted rope becomes the structural element that supports the larger whole, defying gravity to support metal scaffolding that leans tentatively against it. Elsewhere, found material such as rubble hints at slingshot street protests, fragments of urban decay that, ironically, provide essential support to the work.

The installation assembles many of Lopez' prior inquiries of material and conceptual themes, questioning the status of objects, in which wilting throne structures and suspended chandeliers are reduced to outlines. Yet, at its core, the work reflects the hand: the rope is twisted manually by the artist, the glass is pulled, and the scaffolding wrapped in lead, implicating the body in every gesture.

Referencing, while contradicting, one of Richard Serra's iconic works, Lopez' *House of Cards* plays within an act of disappearance. The work defies its image in the same manner that Serra proposes, but without its immense weight. The deftness of the installation responds to a maladroitness of current events and, in re-working familiar materials with a Giacometti-style verticality, takes on a vocabulary of bankruptcy and demise, while imbuing forms with resilience and strength.

#### Biographical Information

Michelle Lopez received her MFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York and BA from Barnard College, Columbia University, New York. Recent solo exhibitions include; 'Halyard', Alt, Istanbul, 2016; 'Angels, Flags, Bangs', The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Connecticut, 2014; Galerie Christophe Gaillard, Paris, 2012; Simon Preston, New York, 2015, 2011 & 2009; 'The Year We Made Contact', LA><ART, Los Angeles, 2008, among others. She was included in Greater New York, PS1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York 2000; Public Art Fund, Metrotech Center, New York, 2000 and California Biennial, OCMA, Orange County, CA, 2004.

Other recent group exhibitions include You Just Fit, You and I, Harvard Carpenter Center for the Arts, Re-Enactments, Museum of Contemporary Art & Design (MCAD), Manila, Philippines, When You Cut into the Present, the Future Leaks Out, No Longer Empty, The Old Bronx Courthouse, New York, NY. Temporary/Contemporary, Bass Museum of Art, Miami, FL, A Chromatic Loss, Bortolami Gallery, New York, 2014; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, 2005, and Artist Space, New York, 2008. Formerly a faculty member at Yale School of Art, Sculpture, she is now faculty in the Fine Arts Program at The School of Design, University of Pennsylvania.

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