

# VITRINE



[Press Release](#)

## NADIM ABBAS

### Poor Toy

11 June 2019 - 25 August 2019

Preview: Monday 10 June, 7-11 pm

Brunch / Artist In-Conversation: Thursday 13 June 2019, 11 am - 12 noon

VITRINE, Basel. Daily 24/7.

"Look at your body—  
A painted puppet, a poor toy  
Of jointed parts ready to collapse,  
A diseased and suffering thing  
With a head full of false imaginings."  
- The Dhammapada

VITRINE, Basel is delighted to present a solo exhibition of work by Hong Kong-based artist Nadim Abbas. Abbas' work encompasses installation, photography, performance, and sculpture, incorporating references from the domestic and the every day to explore how contemporary living conditions have produced particular psychological patterns, trends, and subcultures.

For 'Poor Toy', Abbas positions the domestic space as a site of horror. Using groupings of flatpack furniture, objects fabricated and sourced from IKEA and local second-hand stores, Abbas will arrange a supernatural domestic environment within VITRINE's gallery space, which is sited on and visible from the public square. The objects will be "hacked," with constructed materials or appendages attached to change their structure. Drawing heavily from the IKEA aesthetic that pervades homes around the world, the installation will embody the bland banality of this shared domestic language.

Alongside these sculptural arrangements, drawings and prints will be displayed throughout the space. These hybrid works on paper will reference technical architectural drawings and floor plans, operating in conversation with the groupings of furniture.

Abbas' work draws thematic inspiration from literature, science, and psychology. Weaving together historical and contemporary references from the horror genre, 'Poor Toy' pays homage to writers such as H. P. Lovecraft, whose short stories and novels frequently explore the domestic as a site for disturbing exchanges with supernatural forces.

Abbas' rich and varied research is the driving force behind his making. Ultimately, though, the making process liberates the objects from the weight of these references, allowing the work to hold space and meaning independent of the research that inspired it.

#### Artist Biography

**Nadim Abbas (b. 1980, Hong Kong, China)** received his BFA from London's Chelsea College of Art & Design (2002) and MPhil from the University of Hong Kong Department of Comparative Literature. He was awarded the Hyde Park Art Center Residency, Chicago, USA (2018); Asian Cultural Council Altius Fellowship and the HK Arts Development Award (Young Artist / Visual Arts) in 2014. His site-specific public sculpture 'P-SCAPE' was commissioned at Tai Kwun Prison Yard, Hong Kong (2018).

Recent solo exhibitions include: Blue Noon, Last Tango, Zurich, CH (2017); Camoufleur, VITRINE, London (2017); Chimera, Antenna Space, Shanghai (2016); The Last Vehicle, UCCA, Beijing (2016); #4, Holy Motors, HK (2016); Zone I, The Armory Show, Armory Focus: China, New York (2014); Satellite of \*, CL3 Architects, HK Arts Centre, HK (2013); Tetrophilia, Third Floor Hermés, Singapore (2013); and Marine Lover, ARTHK11 Special Projects (2011).

Recent group exhibitions and performances include: 4 Rooms, Shanghai Biennale, Shanghai, CN (2018/2019); 7th Moscow International Biennale of Contemporary Art (2017/2018); Bubble <3, Munich Biennale, Munich, DE (2018); Milieu, Bern, CH (2017); Only the Lonely, inCube Arts, New York (2016); China 8: Views of China, NRW Forum, Düsseldorf (2015); Triennial: Surround Audience, New Museum, New York (2015); Unseen Existence: Dialogues with the Environment in Contemporary Arts, HK Arts Centre, HK (2014); Going, going, until I meet the tide, Busan Biennale (2014); The Part In The Story Where A Part Becomes A Part Of Something Else, Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam (2014); Apocalypse Postponed, Absolut at Art Basel Hong Kong (2014); and Where Narrative Stops, Wilkinson Gallery, London (2013). Abbas was included in Omar Kholeif's recent publication 'The Artists Who Will Change the World' (2018, published by Thames and Hudson).

**For press enquiries, image requests, and private view accreditation please contact:**

**Will Clarke**

**[press@vitrinegallery.com](mailto:press@vitrinegallery.com)**

#### Notes to Editor

1.

Installation views / press image selection will be released on Friday 7 June 2019.

2.

VITRINE is focused on artistic experimentation and development; material-, process- and installation-led practice at its core.

VITRINE operates a hybrid business model encompassing both commercial gallery and non-profit projects. The gallery was founded by Alys Williams in London in 2012 (grown from a project space launched in 2010) and in Basel in April 2016. Establishing a strong reputation as a selector and nurturer of new talent, VITRINE invites and fosters the development and presentation of new work in spaces in London, UK, and Basel, Switzerland; at art fairs internationally; and through off-site projects in collaboration with partner organisations.

VITRINE nurtures a rigorous commitment to artist development and represents a growing number of international artists: Nadim Abbas, Edwin Burdis, Tim Etchells, Jamie Fitzpatrick, Ludovica Gioscia, Clare Kenny, Wil Murray, Sam Porritt, Maya Rochat and Charlie Godet Thomas; alongside further exhibited and associated international artists.

VITRINE's spaces promote a new model of exhibition-making, encouraging experimentation and installation. Whilst enclosed behind glass, the works extend beyond its boundaries into the surrounding public space. Exhibitions viewable 24/7; Internal viewing rooms open by appointment.

VITRINE's gallery on Vogensplatz has been designed by Swiss designers Jens Müller and Thomas Wüthrich, who collaborate under the label PANTERAPANTERA. The design creates a unique exhibition space echoing VITRINE's original space on Bermondsey Square and encapsulates a hidden, inner viewing room; evolving and pushing the possibilities of this unique gallery model further.

VITRINE, Basel  
Vogesenplatz 15  
4056 Basel  
Switzerland

[info@vitrinegallery.com](mailto:info@vitrinegallery.com)  
[press@vitrinegallery.com](mailto:press@vitrinegallery.com)  
[sales@vitrinegallery.com](mailto:sales@vitrinegallery.com)

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# VITRINE



Nadim Abbas, 4 Rooms (一梯一伙), 2018. Installation view, 12th Shanghai Biennale.

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# VITRINE



Nadim Abbas, Chamber 667, 2016. Installation view, 7th Moscow International Biennale of Contemporary Art, 2017.

# VITRINE



Nadim Abbas, Human Rhinovirus 14, 2016. Installation view, 7th Moscow International Biennale of Contemporary Art, 2017.

# VITRINE



Nadim Abbas, *Camoufleur*, 2017. Installation view, VITRINE London.

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# VITRINE



Nadim Abbas, Blue Noon, 2017. Installation view, Last Tango.

# VITRINE



Nadim Abbas, Deoxyhaemoglobin (Homo Sapiens), 2017.

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Nadim Abbas, P-SCAPE, 2018. Installation view, Tai Kwun Contemporary.

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