

by Christopher Kline

Opening 19.4 at 7 pm, performance at 8 pm

Exhibition runs 19.4-1.6.2014

Opening hours Wed-Sat 2-6 pm

Christopher Kline has recently exhibited in the group shows *TRAME. Omaggio a Seth Siegelaub*, curated by Massimo Minini, Stefano Raimondi, and Mauro Zanchiat at Baco Arte Contemporanea, Bergamo, 2013 IT, *Stille Kracht*, De Warande, Turnhout, 2014 BE, *The Phylogenesis of Generosity*, Prinzessinnengarten Outdoor Sculpture Triennial, curated by Warren Neidich and Helena Producciones, Berlin, 2013 DE, *Case Report*, Gallery Nogueras Blanchard, Barcelona, 2012 ES, as well as *Based in Berlin*, Atelierhaus Monbijoupark, Berlin, 2011 DE. His past solo exhibitions include *Labyrinths* at Lüttgenmeijer, Berlin, 2013 DE, and (in collaboration with Sol Calero) *Modern Dowry*, Toves, Copenhagen, 2013 DK, and *Regalos Ancestrales*, Tenerife Espacio de las Artes (TEA), Tenerife, 2012 ES. Kline had his first solo show, *13 Stations of the Snakebraid*, in Grimmuseum, Berlin 2010. He performs under the alias of Hush and runs the exhibition and project space *Kinderhook & Caracas* with Sol Calero in Berlin.

The GRIMMUSEUM is pleased to present its second solo exhibition of Berlin-based artist and performer Christopher Kline (Kinderhook, NY, USA 1982). *O.K.* is the first manifestation of Kline's ongoing project about the identity and history of a small upstate New York community, his hometown of Kinderhook. The exhibition integrates elements from local history and the visual and performing arts in humorous, tactile and surreal installations. At the opening there will be a performance activating the settings.

The expression „O.K.“, also the title of the show, has its roots in Kinderhook, which was the site of inspiration for the famous tale of the Headless Horseman (*The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*). The area also housed the central ministry of the historical religious group The Shakers, who are known for their celibate and communal lifestyle, pacifism, and their model of equality of the sexes. Since the 1970s it has been home to world famous whistleblower Frank Serpico and the minimalist painter Ellsworth Kelly. The exhibition reenacts and reinterprets these personas, tales, atmospheres and sites in Kline's imaginative collaged visuals.

The term “O.K.” has become one of the most universally used and understood words in the world. Its rise to prominence can be traced back to U.S. president Martin Van Buren's failed presidential reelection campaign of 1840, for which the abbreviation of his hometown nickname “Old Kinderhook” was the rallying cry of his supporters. Oriented around the propagation of “O.K.” as a metaphor for the subtle permeation of small-town American idiosyncrasies into broader cultural forms, Kline's project explores early cultural exports and anomalies originating in Van Buren's and his own birthplace as well as recent local developments since post-industrialization. *O.K.* synthesizes and expands Kinderhook's lore and attempts to construct a fresh overview of its history with new local heroes through the exposition of historical documents, videos, replicas, interpretive research, and collaborations with local students, craftspeople, filmmakers, historians, and other community members.

The show's center-piece is a presentation of pre-production material and tableau rehearsals for a future theatre musical also titled “O.K.”. It explores the role of civic groups as hubs of small-town culture and socialization. Taking place in a make-shift Town Hall, the „meeting room“, as installed in the GRIMMUSEUM, is designed as a generic, multi-purpose community space. It houses signage from a number of disparate local groups ranging from Cub Scouts to Kinderkrafters (a now defunct women's organization) to the Town Zoning Board, and the local school acting troupe. As part of the piece, students from Ichabod Crane Central in Kinderhook participated in a poster design project for the hypothetical musical.

Text: Christopher Kline and Solvej Helweg Ovesen

A
New York State Historical Marker (O.K.)

B (Clockwise from left)
Legend of Sleepy Hollow First Day of Issue
Martin Van Buren Elementary
(The Little Magician)
Meet The Mayor
Northend Woodworking bookholders for
those with use of only one hand, (created by
Matthew Latiolais)
The Legend of Sleepy Hollow
by Washington Irving
The Kinderhook Creature
by Bruce G. Hallenbeck
Northern Columbia County Map
Serpico Lending Library
Traditional Headless Horseman
Eagle Feather
Chatham Banner
Unfinished Old Kinderhook Tin-Punch

C (Basement)
Bruce G. Hallenbeck's Trailer for *Cannibal
Church*, early 80s

D
Sad Ending at Balloon Meadows
Balloon landing on Rapp Road, 1999.
Video by Sarah Cain

E
O.K. Poster Project with students
from Ichabod Crane Central
O.K. Blankets

F
Kinderhook Town Hall

G
New York State Historic Marker
(Visionary Fountain)
Shaker Mountain Meeting
Shaker Gift Drawing Table
Olana Quilt

