

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Zach Feuer Gallery
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Gallery hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10 AM-6 PM

Exhibition dates: September 12 – October 26, 2013

Reception for the artists: Thursday, September 12, 6-8 PM

Street Fighter Tournament: October 19, 5-7 PM

Jon Rafman

You are standing in an open field

Zach Feuer Gallery is pleased to present Jon Rafman's first New York solo gallery exhibition, *You are standing in an open field*. The show opens September 12 and is on view through October 26.

Journeys through virtual landscapes form the heart of Jon Rafman's current show, expressing his continuing search for lost loves, ideals and cultures. Alongside this, Rafman foregrounds his ongoing exploration into the nature of memory conveyed through intimations of archaeology and anthropology, highlighting the way that we rely on objects to locate our relationship to the past. Sculpture, video, and mixed media installation express the material form that memory takes.

The historical impulse to make sacred what is lost becomes all the more urgent when we consider contemporary technologies and online cultures. Rafman encases not-yet-vanished cultures in the form of sham relics or false monuments in order to both recognize their historical value and to critique contemporary amnesia. In his works, ephemeral cultures meet the solidity of constructed artifact. In Rafman's version of archaeology, a large finely engraved stone carving commemorates not fallen war heroes but the names of defunct New York state shopping malls. By using sham ruins to evoke an historical gaze on these contemporary cultural objects, Rafman changes the meaning of both and raises the question of what exactly we are remembering when we visit a museum, when we look at a memorial, or when we click on a broken web-link.

In *A Man Digging*, a virtual flaneur undertakes an evocative journey through the uncanny spaces of video game massacres in *Max Payne 3*. In a re-visioning of the game, Rafman radically changes the role of the player, as the goals of the game give way to a meditation on the game as landscape. Rafman confronts both the danger of passively aestheticizing the "wreckage" of the past and the romantic fixation on death as a placeholder for meaning. As the narrator drifts through nostalgic recollections of his fragmented past, Rafman takes us through the gleaming surfaces of memory to the far edge of the real.

In the film, *Codes of Honor* presents pro video-gamers vivid accounts of their most intense experience; whether it be the prized moment when they master a game or the despairing moment after they have been defeated by an arch-rival. Our narrator is devastated over the loss of the time. Solidarity, honor, and achievement defined his life. However, the lack of tradition and history inherent to the video game blocks his path to generate new meaning in his life after the glory of championship is no longer.

Set to a new track by experimental musician, Oneohtrix Point Never, Rafman's latest film engages with the plethora of desires found in online subcultures. Captivating as much as unsettling, the film immerses us in the densely layered world of internet fetishists. Rather than reducing the fetish to a point of novelty, Rafman delves fully into the tantalizing and mysterious nature of the obsession.

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On October 19, Rafman will be hosting a Street Fighter Tournament at the gallery, which will showcase the best current and former champions in NYC pro-gaming history.

Jon Rafman (b. 1981, Montreal, Canada) is an artist, filmmaker, and essayist. He received his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2008 and his work has been exhibited at the New Museum in New York, the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, and the Saatchi Gallery in London.

This show was produced in collaboration with **AMERICAN MEDIUM**
(Daniel Wallace and Josh Pavlacky)

Special Thanks to Julian Garcia, Matt Goerzen, David Rudnick, Daniel Swan, Andrea Crespo, Sandra Rafman, Jennifer Chaput, Louisa Gagliardi, Reynaldo Schwartz, Stephen Fraught, Rosa Aiello, Fmtownsmarty.tumblr.com, Swampfox, rajutenrakuza, Daniel Lopatin, Arturo Sanchez, Javits Arias, and all the Chinatown Fair regulars.