



SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION

**For Immediate Release**

**June 26, 2012**



Derek Ogbourne, *Rabbit Holding Device*, 2009, courtesy of the artist

**SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES  
*MUSEUM OF OPTOGRAPHY, THE PURPLE CHAMBER*  
BY DEREK OGBOURNE**

**JULY 2 – OCTOBER 3, 2012**

**Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, June 26, 2012 – Sharjah Art Foundation** announces the exhibition ***Museum of Optography, The Purple Chamber***, the latest instalment of London-based artist Derek Ogbourne's ongoing project the ***Museum of Optography***. Housed in the Collections Building in the Arts Area, Heart of Sharjah, this installation juxtaposes drawings, paintings, photography, time-based media and objects to explore the idea that a last image can be imprinted temporarily on the retina at the moment of death.

The ***Museum of Optography*** is a space that invites one to engage and play with myth, science and perception. It is inspired by trauma, by fear of a sudden end, by a fascination with that inevitable moment when the world enters the retina for the last time. Among the diverse themes and complex topics the Museum explores are the circumstances surrounding death, the imagination's attraction to tortuous existential and philosophical questions that can never be answered, and the intersections and blurred lines between art and science, fiction and fact.

***The Purple Chamber***, a new chapter in the history of the ***Museum of Optography***, is the receptacle and the catcher of truth. Its function is to be both cold and objective like a camera, while simultaneously casting doubt in the mind of the viewer. It is a model of the mind in conflict over the inconceivable notion of the moment of death.

This exhibition invites the viewer to play the role of a detective by investigating the mysterious story of optography, built of truths interlaced with lies, lies interlaced with truths. This cryptic tale requires a private eye, a subjective eye, an objective eye and most importantly an active imagination. The extrapolations are endless.

Derek Ogbourne stated: "This is an exhibition about the tendency of our memory to fool, about the hidden internal world cloaked by our senses, about parallel dimensions where I am curator and creator. My history and that of the Museum converge and overlap to create a world where the lines between fact and fiction are blurred, where birth and death merge and where objectivity is lost."

### **About the Artist**

Derek Ogbourne has developed a practice that makes visible the strengths and frailties of being human through his overlapping and sometimes contradictory ways of seeing the world.

Born in 1964, Ogbourne graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art, London in 1989. His work has been exhibited widely in the UK and internationally, in exhibitions including *Space International*, Matadero Municipal, Valencia, Spain (1993), *Frankenstein's Kitchen*, The Loft, London (1995), and *What Makes You, Makes Me*, South London Gallery, London (1996). His video *Gravity + Others* (2003) was part of Sharjah Biennial 6, and his installation *Head Cam Installation* was exhibited at Sharjah Art Museum.

Some 300 works comprise the *Museum of Optography*. The museum has taken on diverse forms in the following exhibitions and contexts: *Museum of Optography*, Galerie Brigitte Schenk, Cologne, Germany (2007), *MicroMuseum of Optography*, British Optical Association Museum, London (2008-2009), *Der letzte Blick*, Kurpfälzisches Museum im Palais Morass, Heidelberg, Germany (2010), *Archive of Optography*, Galerie FLU, Belgrade, Serbia (2011).

Ogbourne has produced several texts to accompany the **Museum**, including the *Encyclopedia of Optography: The Shutter of Death*, Muswell Press, London (2008).

Alongside the ongoing ***Museum of Optography***, Ogbourne also works with a diversity of artistic mediums ranging from photography and large-scale landscape drawings to video and film. Ogbourne currently lives in North West London where he also teaches drawing and video.

### ***Museum of Optography, The Purple Chamber***

July 2 – October 3, 2012

Location: Collections Building, Arts Area, Heart of Sharjah

#### **Timings:**

Saturday – Thursday: 8am – 8pm

Friday: 4pm – 8pm

#### **Ramadan timings:**

Saturday - Thursday:  
Mornings 9am – 2pm  
Evenings 9pm – 11pm

Friday:  
Evenings 9pm – 11pm

**About Sharjah Art Foundation (SAF):**

Sharjah Art Foundation brings a broad range of contemporary art and cultural programmes to the communities of Sharjah, the UAE and the region. Since 2009 SAF has built on the history of cultural collaboration and exchange that began with the first Sharjah Biennial in 1993. Working with local and international partners, we create opportunities for artists and artistic production through our core initiatives that include the Sharjah Biennial, the annual March Meeting, residencies, production grants, commissions, exhibitions, research, publications and a growing collection. Our education and public programmes focus on building recognition of the central role art can play in the life of a community by promoting public learning and a participatory approach to art. Sharjah Art Foundation is funded by the Department of Culture and Information, Government of Sharjah.

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