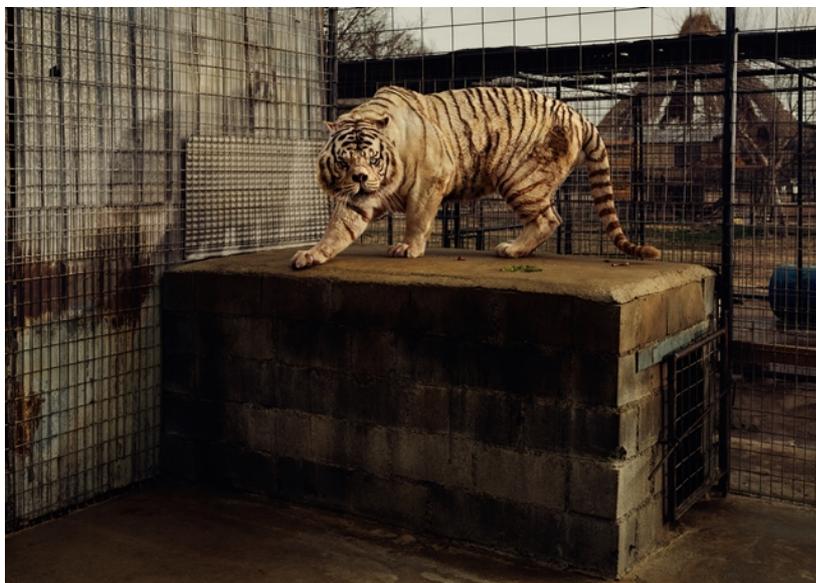


TARYN SIMON



White Tiger (Kenny), Selective Inbreeding, Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge and Foundation,
Eureka Springs, Arkansas
An American Index of the Hidden and Unfamiliar, 2007

Galerie Rudolfinum

27. 4. - 10. 7. 2016

Curator: Michal Nanoru

Opening reception: Tuesday, 26 April 2016, 6pm

Galerie Rudolfinum presents for the first time in Czech Republic photographs of the New York artist Taryn Simon. Simon creates elaborate classifications of obscurities that sometimes hide in plain sight – birds in the James Bond films, illegal imports confiscated at JFK airport, or secret bases of American religious, administrative and military institutions. The conceptual methods, years of research and thoughtful and laborious collection of material make her one of the most significant figures on the contemporary international art scene.

*“Simon has a special talent to fill simple things like a list of paper or a mosquito with significance, make them appear fatal or forbidding, often evoking the atmosphere of McCarthyism and the Cold War. The government, security, science, and entertainment institutions that she surveyed in *An American Index* know such techniques all too well as they are all invested in covering their operations and are rich sources for myth creation and multiple truths.”*

Michal Nanoru, curator

Galerie Rudolfinum presents six series of photographs and videos from 2007 to 2014, among which belong the *Field Guide to Birds of the West Indies*, *Contraband*, *Picture Collection*, *An American Index of the*

Hidden and Unfamiliar, Image Atlas and Cutaways. In a time when we increasingly define ourselves by things, it is mostly objects, not people or situations, that feature in her photographs. If they ever inhabit her art, humans usually succumb to the role of variables in larger, dominating systems. Simon's work questions the modes of representation – it asks how to depict complex notions like taxation, injustice, or power, it examines the forms and value of information, be it DNA or travel catalogues of places soon to be bombarded, and eventually shows seemingly neutral messages as inescapably constructed, predetermined and controlling, but still subject to chance.



Cryopreservation Unit, Cryonics Institute, Clinton Township, Michigan
An American Index of the Hidden and Unfamiliar, 2007

Simon's methods, cultivated by investigation as well as critical theory, often involve years of research, intense travel and laborious collection of material. The conceptual approach is, however, not accompanied by repudiation of the visual and the formal or of storytelling, their seductiveness is part of the plan. So much so that she is almost willing to touch live HIV virus just to get the shadow right for the picture. The images, taken mostly by large format cameras, always aim at the beautiful and together with the texts they can be read like Cold War era spy novels, conjuring topics from the 20th and 21st century mythologies: the twists of international affairs, the historic ironies, the what-if magnetisms of conspiracy theories, and combine them with the charms of cabinets of curiosities or the exponents of Kafkaesque's structures that we pass on the way from the airport.



Folder: Express Highways
Picture Collection, 2013

The unique position Taryn Simon holds on the international art scene lies first and foremost in the remarkably complex and multilayered character of her works. Simon considers photography, writing, graphic design, performance, sculpture, and film all part of her medium. Synchronisation and consistency, for which her capabilities and resources in these fields allow, the sheer amount of information,



Nesting Dolls (Counterfeit)
Contraband, 2010

the persuasiveness of the images, the impersonal tone of the anchoring texts, the seriousness of the designs and exquisiteness of the materials used for making these into desirable artefacts, all present a face of objective and unquestionable authority. But what they are actually here to do is obscure and by that ultimately highlight the necessarily manipulative nature of organisation of information and the ever more elusive line between reality and fiction, trustworthy and unbelievable, essential and arbitrary, order and chaos.

Taryn Simon (*1975, New York) has worked in photography, text, sculpture, film, and performance. Rigorous research, interest in systems of categorisation and classification has been symptomatic for her work. Simon's artistic development has been strongly influenced by her father, who as an employee of the US State Department extensively photographed his trips. Taryn Simon first studied environmental sciences at Brown University before transferring to art semiotics. At the same time, she took photography classes at Rhode Island School of Design. Her works have been the subject of monographic exhibitions at Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2013); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2012); Tate Modern, London (2011); Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin (2011); and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2007). Permanent collections include Metropolitan Museum of Art, Tate Modern, the Guggenheim Museum, Centre Georges Pompidou, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

For more information, visit the gallery's Facebook page or its website at www.galerierudolfinum.cz.

ADMISSION

Full: CZK 120

Reduced: CZK 70

OPENING HOURS

Tue–Wed, Fri–Sun:

10am–6pm

Thu: 10am–8pm

Mondays closed

GALERIE RUDOLFINUM

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Special thanks

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