

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

Los Angeles

Mike Kelley

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456 North Camden Drive
January 11–February 19



Mike Kelley, *Kandor 10 A (Grotto)*, 2010, elastomer foam, blown glass with water-based resin coating, wood, enamel urethane rubber, acrylic paint, lighting fixtures, clothing and lenticular panels, 11 x 16 x 12'.

In this exhibition, Mike Kelley combines two of his major ongoing major projects: the “Kandor” series, 1999–, and the *Extracurricular Activity Projective Reconstructions* [EAPRs], 2005–. The outcome retrospectively distills a staggering complex of visual tropes from the history of artistic production since Cézanne. On display is a twenty-first-century tour de force of twentieth-century aesthetics.

To begin, Kelley's new amalgamations speak to a notion of doubling: seeking common denominators between the *Kandors*, which replicate the encasement of Superman's eponymous hometown in glass jars, and the *EAPRs*, which restage amateur performances based on found photographs. *EAPR #34*, 2010, for instance, stems from a would-be harem picture, from which Kelley spawned two performances, displayed on two adjacent screens. In one, which bears the subtitle "The King and Us," we see eight women catering to their king's sensual pleasures; in the other, "The Queens and Me," characters reverse roles so that the male figure now indulges the whims of several queens.

Visitors might then enter the adjacent *Kandor 10 A (Grotto)*, 2010, to find an all-white version of the city set on a candy-apple-red base. Projection and replication are central to experiencing this object, as shots of the white Kandor are intercut into the king and queen videos, while, within the grotto, strong direct lighting casts its shadow dramatically on a plastic green panel affixed to the wall.

Both works participate in Kelley's long-standing engagement with destabilizing identity, whether through categories of gender or myths of origin. But *Kandor 10 A*, *EAPR #34*, and the other works on view are not so easily summarized. Through found objects, lenticular panels set into light boxes, and references to painterly abstraction, Kelley's adjoining installations fashion worlds animated by the twofold poles of identification that frame so many of the twentieth century's social struggles and aesthetic regimes. Whether dealing with oppositions of male/female, master/slave, figure/ground, or composition/noncomposition, Kelley entangles intricate environments built of binary scaffolding. One wonders whether we similarly spend our time abiding within and repeating such former projections.

— James Nisbet