

TUDOR BRATU

THE DISSIDENTS' TRAVEL GUIDE

05.09 - 11.10.2014

The Dissidents' Travel Guide. **Tudor Bratu's** first solo exhibition at Joey Ramone, proposes to function as both a fragmented and fragmentary rendering of the contemporary nature of traditional documentary form. Content-wise, Bratu's work engages a study of the post-ism identity in dealing with a globalized ethics, which seems to govern social spheres worldwide.

The works exhibited, ranging from an artist's book in edition, to photography, video and sculpture, do not intend to propose their own identity as being works *of art*, but more as being works *of direct observation*. The materials Bratu chose to showcase, results of the artist's research while travelling through Romania and China, are formalized, but not fundamentally altered. In this sense Bratu acknowledges the necessity of raw direct exposure as perhaps the only viable entrance to the fundamental critiques frequently and elusively addressed to governing systems.

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The artist's publication, which provides the exhibition with its title, and acts as the show's philosophical backbone, contains drawings, photography, and a crescendo series of essays authored by Bratu. The essays gradually zoom in on the nature of a perceived contemporary moral predicament, which could be summarized as: *we all know we need to act now, but we seem to systematically fail in doing anything at all*.

Bratu's main question remains a presumably simple one, for the artist in the end just asks *why?*. This seemingly uncomplicated question however could not be effectively reached without a very carefully constructed journey through a variety of authors, concepts, and images, which serve to elucidate the reasons societies, governments, and individuals alike, seem incapable of deciding on a course of action, which would embrace and defend what Bratu proposes to be a course of *a basic human decency*.

The Dissidents' Travel Guide stays true to its name: Bratu mimics travel guide logic, by briefly showcasing real life situations in an almost impartial way. At the same time the artist proposes the nature and core of dissidency to be reached through experience by close proximity, i.e. through a conscious documentary approach to a given context, which could perhaps serve as a catalyst to permanently altering perception and consecutively, action.

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