OMER FAST: PRESENT CONTINUOUS
Press View: Thursday 17 March 2015 / 14.00-16.00
Exhibition: 18 March – 26 June 2016

BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead will proudly present the UK’s first comprehensive monographic exhibition by Jerusalem-born, Berlin-based Omer Fast. Opening 18 March 2016, Present Continuous will be comprised of new and recent work. Fast is best known for video works that question the conventions of storytelling, media reportage and historical representation. He employs cinematic techniques and complex narrative structures to explore the ways stories, and consequently history and identity, are formed. Undermining the divide between ‘reality’ and ‘representation’ and between document and artifice, his practice also interrogates the status of the image.

The exhibition will also present the new work Spring which will have its international premiere at BALTIC. Spring is a portrait of two young German men whose lives intersect violently. The work, presented on several screens, delves into emotions of longing, loss and revolt, reaching a surprising climax from two different perspectives.

This exhibition will present several installation and projection-based works. CNN Concatenated 2002 is an 18 minute-long video collage edited from thousands of individual words spoken by presenters on the Cable News Network. The footage is reconstructed to form a disconcerting poetic narrative with an underlying sense of threat. 5,000 Feet is the Best, 2011, is underpinned by an interview Fast conducted with a former operator of Predator drones. The 30minute film weaves together the operator’s account of his life and work along with scenes depicting crimes in and around Las Vegas. More recently, Everything that Rises Must Converge, 2013, follows four adult film performers during their day at work. The 56-minute long film is presented as four simultaneous projections.

Despite their often overt political content, the narrative constructions and deviations of Fast’s videos ensure they transcend the issues he at first seems to address. It is, rather, the traditions of storytelling and its role in creating fact and identity that is central to his work.

END

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NOTES TO EDITORS

A new accompanying publication, *Omer Fast: Present Continuous* is available from October 2015. Published by Jeu de Paume, Paris; BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead and Kunst en Museum of Modern Art, Aalborg, it includes new essays by Jennifer Allen, Tom McCarthy, Laurence Sillars, an interview with Omer Fast by Marina VinyesAlbes and Fast’s original scripts for the works shown in the exhibition.

Omer Fast (born 1972, Jerusalem) lives and works in Berlin. He was the recipient of the 2009 Preis der NationalgaleriefürJungeKunst and the 2008 Bucksbaum Award. Fast has had solo exhibitions at the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus; The Power Plant, Toronto; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Berkeley Art Museum; Henie OnstadKunstsenter, Oslo; KölnischerKunstverein, Cologne; La Caixa Forum, Barcelona; South London Gallery, London and MUMOK- Museum ModernerKunstStifung Ludwig, Vienna. His work has been included in LLUMnations, 54th Venice Biennale, dOCUMENTA (13), Performa 09, the 2008 and 2002 Whitney Biennials and Liverpool Biennial 2008 as well as group exhibitions at institutions such as Centre Pompidou, Paris; ZKM, Karlsruhe; Barbican Art Gallery, London and The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC, among other venues.

BALTIC is a major international centre for contemporary art situated on the south bank of the River Tyne in Gateshead, England and has welcomed over 6 million visitors since opening to the public in July 2002.

BALTIC presents a distinctive and ambitious programme of exhibitions and events, and is a world leader in the presentation and commissioning of contemporary visual art. Housed in a landmark ex-industrial building, BALTIC consists of 2,600 square metres of art space, making it the UK’s largest dedicated contemporary art institution.

BALTIC has gained an international reputation for its commissioning of cutting-edge temporary exhibitions. It has presented the work of over 300 artists from 52 countries in 183 exhibitions to date ranging from acclaimed figures such as AnishKapoor, Steve McQueen, Antony Gormley, Susan Hillier, Yoko Ono, Ed and Nancy Kienholz, Daniel Buren, Jason Rhoades, Fiona Tan through to emerging artists.

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**OPENING HOURS:**
Monday – Sunday 10.00-18.00
(excluding Tuesday)
Tuesday 10.30-18.00

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