



Robert Cumming (American, b. 1943). *Theater for Two, Easy Analogies*, 1978. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy of the artist. © Robert Cumming

Robert Cumming: The Secret Life of Objects

Perception, language, and the nuances of photographic vision are common themes in the work of Robert Cumming. His method of portraying the physically impossible so that it appears visually accurate has its roots in his early career as a painter, sculptor, performance artist, and mail artist. Cumming's elaborate set ups, fabricated according to a creative logic of his own devising, were often the outcome of weeks of planning, followed by a flurry of building and assembling. He would then photograph what he built and present the results as black-and-white 8 x 10 prints. It is notable that the quality of his photographic work is high, for anything less would detract from the more serious nature of Cumming's intent: to encourage viewers to reevaluate the world through his deep appreciation for absurdity.

Cumming knows the camera to be a problematic recording tool that has been so since the inception of the medium. Two-dimensional space and the effects of exposure—lens, film quality, depth of field—transform what we see in the world into something new, something artificial but ostensibly real as well. Cumming uses this paradox to explore tensions between reality and fiction, the everyday and fantasy. His work draws attention to the “perceptual glitches” inherent to photography and thus thwarts the easy consumption of images in an increasingly media-rich world.

Inspired by the fantasy-scape of Hollywood and its experimental and hedonistic culture, Cumming's witty and innovative approach continues to influence conceptual artists and photographers today.

Participation Fee: TBD + Round-trip shipping, Insurance, and Pro-rated crating

Booking Period: 12 Weeks

Contents: 170 photographs + ~100 objects which include small sculpture, props, postcards, continuity stills, sketchboards, other works on paper, mail art, and a couch

Size: 495 linear feet (approx)

Related Publication: *Robert Cumming: The Difficulties of Nonsense*, Edited and with an essay by Sarah Bay Gachot and an artist interview by David Company

Available: Starting Summer 2017