



Brian Ulrich (American, b. 1971). *Cole Haan*, Chicago, IL, 2013. Courtesy of the artist.
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Brian Ulrich: *The Centurion*

An artist drawn to exploring the visual landscape of America's consumption economy, Brian Ulrich (American, b. 1971) has spent the last several years photographing sites and people associated with extreme wealth.

The title *The Centurion* refers to a modern myth turned reality that began in the 1980s. According to urban legend, American Express issued, by invitation only, a special charge card to ultra-wealthy individuals, who could use it to purchase anything and everything they wanted—from personal planes to private islands—as long as they did not disclose the existence of the card. The company fielded hundreds of calls from people requesting the card, and finally, in 1999, it launched the Centurion, an actual credit card program with features and benefits resembling those attributed to the imaginary card.

This transformation of rumor into fact presaged the accelerating pace of income inequality, in which the dream of extreme wealth has increasingly become a reality for a small sliver of contemporary society.

Ulrich's photographs document three key manifestations of this phenomenon: the display window, where luxury goods are presented as exclusive objects of desire; personal appearance, in which individuals cultivate eccentricity, highlight cultural mannerisms, and flaunt elite fashion in order to set themselves apart; and new residences designed to look like castles, with curtain walls serving as visual and conceptual fortifications against outsiders. His straightforward, beautifully constructed images take their subjects at face value, yet suggest that the extent of the artifice on display disguises a fragile illusion.

Participation Fee: TBD + Round trip shipping and Insurance

Booking Period: 12 Weeks

Contents: 21 inkjet prints, 1 set of objects, 1 sculpture, audio track

Size: 120 linear feet (approx)

Available: Spring 2016

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