MURMURS FROM THE GLASS HOUSE

Jake Michael Singer's first solo show at THK Gallery CT

30 October – 06 December 2019
www.thkgallery.com

I **usually wake up and things are already happening. I guide processes in the studio**. On a cold day steel melts slower, it's getting hotter these days and I am slower. One day, Roy, the lead technician is sick, another day I am. I'm always cleaning. Sometimes there is a riot outside and tear gas comes into the studio and then the church singers, who I hear in the morning and night, stop singing. Silence broken by the hollow sound of a car moving through the dark street. A glass bottle breaking. On their way to school, kids walk past the ruins of a dead house with even dead-er men sticking needles in their arms. Again, the air smells like burning plastic. Silence broken by maskandi music in a taxi. People getting by. Silent fortitude. Always a hapless someone shouting on the street, always sounding like the same person. Some people can't leave this place so easily. I can.

Dostoevsky describes the crystal palace in *Notes from Underground* as the epitome of Western enlightenment and idealism. I translate this into our contemporary context as *The Glass House*. It probably refers to one of those new buildings in Sandton and I'm using this metaphor because, it's subject, still remains something that people want to post on Instagram. Rich n' sexy. I think about this a lot because I almost come from that life and I often wonder if this is what the future of the world looks like.

The world had a beginning. And now its translating and transitioning, hopefully upwards towards something great. I wonder if this applies to South Africa or are we in a spiral state? I wonder if this applies to The World or are we in a spiral world? Since the Earth is spinning in orbit, the latter is more likely true.

I have asked people on Tinder what animal they would be if they could choose. Most girls choose a fox. I haven't asked any guys and neither guy nor girl has yet asked me, but since we're here I'm going to tell you. It's

Murmur and Fold, 2019. Opposite Page: Jake Michael Singer in studio, 2019. Photographer: Brett Rubin

a bird. Probably because birds are envoys of the divine; the higher plane. Even though most aren't remarkably smart, they still have the advantage perspective. Everyone is obsessed by *The Glass House* because they want to mate real bad and displaying those thing means you're likely to attract a mate and earn respect. Even if it's to the detriment of the planet, even if it's to the detriment of everyone you ever set your eyes on, digitally or otherwise. The problem is people either lack perspective or they aren't close enough to the divine.

I think it's the artists role to index something that is just beyond the obvious. This thing that is doing the indexing, like a forefinger, should be miraculous in its construction so that it looks as fascinating from close as from

Whirl and Conflict, 2018. Opposite Page: *Escalation Incident with Spiral,* 2019

far; so that you stay transfixed and then after looking at it for so long, as soon as you think you know it, you don't. If you know quantum physics, you don't. If you know the Tao, you don't. Same same.

In Murmurs is an exhibition comprising sculpture, photography and painting. I have called it *In Murmurs* for two reasons. One: The main corpus of the show comprises my Murmurations. Two: I think a murmur is the perfect way of speaking because its soft and gentle, yet echoes everlastingly. It's an expedient and effective gesture, fulfilling its role and then passing away like a breathe,

like an orgasm, like that small quark of energy that keeps us alive and vanishes in death. Big things start in the small.

*"Some things lead and some things follow
Some breathe gently and some breathe hard
Some are strong and some are weak
Some destroy and some are destroyed."*

Jake Michael Singer's first solo show in Cape Town, *In Murmurs,* **will be held at THK Gallery from 30 October – 06 December 2019.**