

**December 15, 2013**

Rachel Rom at E.G.P Galerie, Paris, Sara Peguin, ArtSetters/La Clique Magazine - 1/2

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## RACHEL ROM AT EGP GALLERY, PARIS



Exhibition: [Rachel Rom's solo show](#)

Venue: [EGP Gallery, Paris](#)

Dates: Until December 21st, 2013

Article: [Sarah Peguine](#) | [FB page](#)

Rachel Rom's solo show at EGP Gallery in Paris has many layers, lives and meanings.

In an era of constant documentation of our life, this exhibition asks what is representation and deals with the notion of a photograph's life. What happens once Rom has shot a portrait? You would think it stops there, framed on a wall.

The essence of Rachel Rom's work, however, is of giving new lives, to the persons represented in the works, to the works themselves as an object and to the artist she is.

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Text

Rom's show is in fact a mise en abyme of her previous exhibition which took place in Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin. It is a show within a show. The works from that exhibition are displayed on wallpapers covering the gallery's walls and revealing the exact setting in which they were previously presented. The only real artwork hanging on the walls are the missing parts of each installation represented on the wallpaper. They complete the work and create the illusion of a time shift. The entity is at both places at the same time in different forms. The works represented on the large wallpapers are stacked in the middle of the space.

(Exhibition views of Rom's show in Paris) Rachel Rom is the doppelganger the artist chose for herself. It is a way for her to distance herself from the works. In an essay Rom wrote about her approach to photography she talked about distancing, and it is again very present in this show. Rom distanced herself from her previous show, using it as raw material to create an entirely different and new work.

(The Berlin Show- represented in the Paris Show as a trompe l'oeil) The women Rom photographs also play a role in that distancing. They all show a certain longing, they reveal a melancholy, and a feeling of absence: empty gazes, mysterious poses, grainy black and white, these all play a part in creating a mysterious and detached atmosphere.

This distancing, is in constant tension with the artist's desire to freeze reality, to keep her subjects alive, even once they've been "represented". This tension is present in the act of reusing a show but also in the series "Remanence" where Rom decided, once she became a mother, to photograph her own mother at her age. The mothers become eternal and it's again a mise en abyme. A mother within a mother.

This idea of re-photographing portraits is best explained by the artist:

"I would re-photograph portraits I had taken. I would print the portrait, frame it and hang it on the wall. A couple of years later I would re-photograph it, frame the new portrait and hang it to be re-photographed again after another couple of years, to give it a remanence in time. The work would be reborn and thereby remain eternally unfinished. The same portrait would thus exist in 1982, 2011 and maybe 2020. The subject moves forward with time, but does not age. As if renovated. And yet, the distance widens and the trace intensifies."

That idea of a trace is everywhere in her current show. It is physically there, stacked in the middle of the gallery, it is in the wallpaper documenting the setting of her previous show, it is in the mother looking at us and even in the vitrine of the gallery with a review in German about the Berlin show.

Rom's works are about ephemerality, about time, about representation, about life, about leaving a trace.