

# IMPORT PROJECTS

KEITHSTRASSE 10 / 10787 BERLIN

## PRESS RELEASE

### INVISIBLE MEASURE

#### ARTIST

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#### CURATORS

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#### IMPORT PROJECTS

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04.11.-08.12.2013

OPENING HOURS  
THURSDAY-SATURDAY  
12 - 6PM

AND BY APPOINTMENT

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02 NOV**

**19-22 H**

Invisible Measure investigates narratives that are hidden in plain view. The areas of investigation span the last century and attempt to understand how our relationship to transparency has evolved alongside the gradual shift from material to immaterial labor processes. From the use of transparent materials in architecture beginning at the turn of the last century, to the political necessity of transparency today, the project focuses on the use of transparency as a vehicle for ideological social reform. The notion itself seems to imply a certain absolute, a one-to-one assurance of accurate vision. Yet the word defines not accuracy, but appearance. Appearance, however, is not solid, it can be fleeting, momentary, prone to deception and hallucination. If we break the word down: trans apparent: through - it - appearance, what then, is IT?

With Invisible Measure, Beny Wagner addresses a series of moments throughout history and in the present that function (or have functioned) as IT. The exhibited works take as a starting point the shift brought about by the invention of Plexiglas, a material which, for the first time, created transparency without the compromise of fragility. When Plexiglas was invented in Germany in 1933, it was immediately put to military use. Today's inheritors of the Plexiglas patent – while proud of their product's optimization of our ability to see – are keen to obscure its genesis. This occluded truth is the catalyst for the exhibition's meditation on how our understanding of transparency has radically changed our compulsion for clarity of vision. The works, Vision Contract, Light Politics, and Without Seams (2013), employ the material of Plexiglas and the language used to represent it to create a rupture in our systematized codes of vision.

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The film *Invisible Measure* (2013) is a reflection on the ideology that attended the increasing uptake of glass in early 20th Century architecture. Its voice-over borrows from Paul Scheerbart, a writer and poet who authored the influential book *Glass Architecture* in 1914. Glimpses of our contemporary environment bear witness to the traces of Scheerbart's now century-old visions of a glass world so virtuous, it "would rather break than bend". *Invisible Measure* lingers on Scheerbart's fantastical projections, superimposing his crystal palaces with the reality of Plexiglas, a material as malleable as each of our individual desires.

As our world of production moves further towards the immaterial, so has our relation to language. Today's 'transparency' functions on a high level of abstraction, referring to government, business, and global exchange. Transparency International is a global anti-corruption organization. Founded in 1993 by Peter Eigen, former World Bank Head of Operations in Africa and South America, the organization can take credit for much of the proliferation of the term in today's world. By this organization's reckoning, transparency is quantifiable - based on in-depth statistical analysis. The sound installation, *Through It Appearance* (2013), is based on an interview the artist conducted with Peter Eigen. The resulting conversation leads to surprising word plays, pointing to the intangible function of the term. It seems the only way to actually address transparency is through metaphors that often verge on banality. In the work, Eigen's voice is broadcast in a large room, suggestive of a hidden omnipotence.

Language, much like vision, functions to fill the impossible gap between how we describe things and what they are. This exhibition functions within the space of this gap, extracting the intangible narratives of people throughout history who have placed themselves on the thin line of the lens. *Invisible Measure* seeks to problematize existing notions where language and vision intersect. Far from attempting to synthesize a single perspective, the aim is to decentralize various points of view, an exercise in refraction.

**Beny Wagner** (1985, German, American, Israeli), is an artist living and working in Berlin. He graduated with Honors from Bard College, New York, in 2008 with a degree in Art and 20th Century History. His multimedia practice focuses on the convergence of language, vision, and political critique.

He has exhibited internationally, with solo exhibitions at Future Gallery (Berlin), Kleine Humboldt Galerie (Berlin), White Columns (New York), and has participated in group exhibitions, Venice Biennial, Tokyo Hongo Site (Tokyo), LEAP (Berlin) as well as workshops with Harun Farocki (Rio de Janeiro), HIAP (Helsinki). He is the recipient of the Sol Lewitt Award, and Nelson B. Delevan Award.