

# THOMAS MACKER

## *Holdout*

June 24 – July 29, 2017

Opening Reception: Saturday, June 24th, 6-8pm

KLOWDEN MANN

6023 Washington Blvd.

Culver City, CA 90232

[www.klowdenmann.com](http://www.klowdenmann.com)

[deb@klowdenmann.com](mailto:deb@klowdenmann.com)



Thomas Macker

*I Kissed My Father / I Kissed My Son, Proud Intimacy, Bedtime Routine*

2016

Copper plate, black spray paint, liquid crystal paint (thermal paint) hydrodip frame

16 by 20 inches

Klowden Mann is pleased to present *Holdout*, Thomas Macker's third solo show with the gallery. In this body of work, Macker explores camouflage, historical war propaganda and the identity of the "holdout" figure in modern warfare through the use of new media materials and techniques such as flir technology (thermal imaging), autostereograms (magic eye), and light interference pigments (color-changing paint). Prior iterations of *Holdout* took place in 2017 at the Center for the Arts and 2016 at the Nicolaysen Art Museum, both in Wyoming. The exhibition will be on view from June 24th through July 29th, with an opening reception on Saturday June 24th, from 6-8pm.

The narrative of the exhibition follows the complicated power dynamics of visibility and vision, the militarization of landscape, and the historical role of the artist in the protection and proliferation of dominant ideology. Artistic collaboration in the military is well-documented. As Macker says in his artist statement:

Camouflage design began with artists (camoufleurs) radically shifting perceptions of the figure in the landscape - blurring object from void and making the two indistinguishable. Since World War I, artists like Paul Klee, Franz Marc and other expressionists, cubists and surrealists have worked as camoufleurs. Edward Wadsworth, a vorticist artist painted "razzle dazzle" patterns on battleships. The vorticists painted hard abstract and geometric forms, rejecting the nude figure and landscape; this rejection was a consequence of witnessed forms of destruction seen in WWI. Artists were at once reacting emotionally to the war while designing the camouflage to canvas the acting agents. Does the landscape change due to human warring? Does a foreign occupation with a strict palette and style effect the landscape?

The societal impulse to alter landscape in the service of technological progress and warfare is one that has occupied Macker for some time. By utilizing media with military application or reference, the exhibition underlines the way this desire to dominate has altered how we see and are seen—our visible function as actors and objects within the larger landscape. Macker explains, "Thermal imaging and infrared has effected how the figure appears or performs in the landscape. Seen from the air by drones we are viewed only by our heat signature—we are mediated by properties that cannot be seen by eyesight."

The exhibition features framed paintings on the walls as well as freestanding sculptural works, and much of the work invites engagement and physical participation in a way that seems to invite empathy as well as complicity in the narrative content of the work. The framed works that meet you as you enter the exhibition are heat sensitive, and meant to be touched—with details which become clearer only after you do so. A rotating thermal imaging camera sits at the center of the space, making visible the heat signature of visitors to the exhibition, as well as capturing heat points camouflaged in the works that reveal hidden imagery.

Traditionally, the term “holdout” refers to a soldier who refuses to yield, even after his country has signed the terms of surrender—used perhaps most saliently in recent memory to refer to Japanese soldiers after World War II, a few of whom famously refused to surrender to enemy forces for years, or decades after the war had ended. These are soldiers who, as Macker states, “were loyal to the empire to the point of myth.”

*Thomas Macker (b. 1982, Los Angeles) is a multi-media artist living in Wyoming. He received his MFA from CalArts in Photography and Media in 2011, and currently works as the photography department head for the arts and education nonprofit, the Art Association of Jackson Hole, where he is also a curator for the organization’s gallery. Macker was a 2015 Wyoming Art’s Council fellow, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts. Recent exhibitions include the National Museum of Wildlife Art in Wyoming, The Beirut Art Center in Beirut, Lebanon, the University of Wyoming Art Museum and a solo exhibition at the Nicolaysen Contemporary Art Museum.*