



**ADAD HANNAH**  
Glints and Reflections

**CYNTHIA GIRARD-RENARD**  
Our Mad Masters

**THE IMAGE IN ITS OWN RIGHT**  
In collaboration with Vidéographe

FALL 2017



Adad Hannah, *A Moment of Reflection* (detail), 2009

# ADAD HANNAH

## Glints and Reflections

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Curators: Lynn Bannon and Anne-Marie St-Jean Aubre

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Adad Hannah has become known on the national and international art scene through his original creative work that combines photography, video, installation, and performance. These intertwined modes of expression have generated the *still*: a video showing, in a fixed manner and from a frontal perspective, a scene skillfully constructed and orchestrated by the artist in which participants, whose gestures are fixed without being totally immobile, take part in various activities. Hannah's works, living pictures, appeal to the fascinated and attentive eye of the spectator, who simultaneously sees and watches time-based images, thus experiencing the temporary in continuation in a new way.

Time occupies a prominent place in the artist's production, forged by a lasting interest in temporality and its complex relationship with photography and video. This is supplemented by a constant desire to diversify the means of animating a fixed image, beginning with capturing on film a pose that is held momentarily by the protagonists' vacillating bodies. More recently, the artist endeavoured to generate the illusion of movement by taking a multitude of photographs of a body in action in order to successively decompose all the phases, reminiscent of the chronophotography of Eadweard Muybridge (1830-1904).

But these are only a few of the parameters that characterize Adad Hannah's art, punctuated by a diversity of notions that enrich his work, such as seriality, repetition, recovery, duplication, reflection, mise en abyme, and visual citation. Although these ideas are recurrent in his work, Hannah avoids the pitfalls of redundancy by creating images that are distinct in their content, though related formally and conceptually. This is why the order of the works presented here does not follow the chronological order of their production. Instead, it runs back and forth among the themes that define the narrative of his artistic practice, divided into three thematic blocks: *Mirroring the Museum*, *Reflections of Artworks*, and *Lives Captured*.

**Lynn Bannon, Guest Curator**



Adad Hannah, *Unwrapping Rodin 6* (detail), 2010

# MIRRORING THE MUSEUM

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Mirroring museums. This is what Adad Hannah endeavoured to do in the projects where he reinscribes various museum galleries in the current moment. To achieve this, he uses mirrors as rear-view mirrors in exhibition rooms, swapping the conventional presentation of objects with unusual and reversed views. This strategic process allows him to implement his singular approach without obscuring the richness of the collections that welcome him. Moreover, by reflecting art, his projects reflect on art, on our perceptions of the works and the places that house them. True *mises en abyme*, these museographical series pose underlying questions about the museum as a place of legitimization, conservation and mediation of art.

## *A Man Mirroring I*

2008

Colour photograph, 101 x 76 cm

Collection Fonderie Darling

## *A Man Mirroring II*

2008

Colour photograph, 101 x 76 cm

Collection Fonderie Darling

## *Man in a Red Shirt*

2008

HD video, 8 min 15 s

Private collection

## *On Location, from the series Prado Project*

2008

Colour photograph, 102 x 136 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

## *Sitting in the Great Hall*

2008

Colour photograph, 102 x 136 cm

Private collection

## *Two Mirrors*

2008

HD video, 6 min 36 s

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

## *Mirroring the Brodsky*

2012

HD video, 6 min 05 s

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

The installation *Mirroring the Brodsky* was created in the former apartment of the Soviet artist Isaak Brodsky (1884-1939), which was converted in 1949 into a museum teeming with paintings, sculptures, furniture, as well as folk and artisanal artifacts. Brodsky, a prominent nationalist, set up his collection in a tumultuous sociopolitical context and his objectives, among others, were to protect national culture and bring art closer to ordinary life. Hannah recalls this proximity in two ways: first, by including staff members and museum visitors as models in his two videos, and second, by integrating them into this diverse, socialist-themed collection. In doing so, Hannah restores and reinforces the idea, borrowed from his predecessor, that art is never produced in isolation from society.

## *A Rising Tide, from the series Daydreams of the Drunken Scholar*

2012

HD video, 5 min 24 s

Private collection

## REFLECTIONS OF ARTWORKS

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In a completely different manner, Adad Hannah also uses the mirror as an emblem of painting and a metaphor of the quest for verisimilitude, revisiting and renewing the schema of resemblance that dominated artistic practices from the Renaissance to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This return to the history of art is manifested through his citational projects in which he re-produces certain works by great masters (Dürer, Velasquez, Géricault, Rodin, Hogarth, Millais, Gilbert, and Picasso) that he transposes and transforms by reworking them through his own stylistic filter. By recreating the images in his own way, Hannah uses the citational activity as a strategy that enables him to assert himself as a “reviver” of the works he revitalizes, adjusting their content to the social realities of the contemporary era.

## *The Raft of the Medusa (100 Mile House) 4*

2009

Colour photograph, 100,5 x 133,5 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain



## *The Raft of the Medusa (100 Mile House) 7*

2009

Colour photograph, 100,5 x 123 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

## *The Raft of the Medusa (100 Mile House) 9*

2009

Colour photograph, 100,5 x 133,5 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

## *The Raft of the Medusa (Saint-Louis) 4*

2016

HD video, 5 min 49 s

Private collection

## *Blackwater Ophelia*

2013

HD video, 10 min 41 s

Private collection

## *Blackwater*

2013

Colour photograph, 99 x 164 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

# LIVES CAPTURED

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Adad Hannah's images do not require texts or soundtracks because the fragments of lives captured by the artist speak for themselves. Calling up the idea of an interiorized cultural space, one that is familiar and private, these genre scenes pose an incarnate look on protagonists from different social groups. These depictions of ordinary people serve as stepping stones for the artist to think about society and its players, as well as to explore various aspects of interhuman relationships, sometimes discreetly, sometimes with assurance, but always with the avowed aim of understanding the reality of various communities. Despite the fact that Hannah's social projects are not actual "documentaries," they remain witnesses of the era they portray, which the artist continues to depict today.

## *Unwrapping Rodin 6*

2010

Colour photograph, 175 x 127 cm

Private collection

## *Unwrapping Rodin 2*

2010

Colour photograph, 175 x 127 cm

Private collection

## *Untitled (After Dürer)*

2015

Colour photograph, 61 x 94 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

## *Three in the Palm (Silver Nails KD)*

2015

Colour photograph, 60 x 40 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

## *Fingers Crossed (Turquoise Diamond Silver Nails KD)*

2008

Colour photograph, 60 x 40 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

## *Wrestlers 2, from the series After Muybridge*

2016

Colour photograph, 137,2 x 124,5 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

## *Front Handspring, from the series After Muybridge*

2016

Colour photograph, 91,5 x 233,7 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

*Handstand with Chair*, from the series  
*After Muybridge*

2016

Colour photograph, 48,3 x 218,4 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

*Six Russians Eating Ice Cream*,  
from the series *The Russians*

2011

HD video, 4 min 27 s

Private collection

*Russian Woman at Home*,  
from the series *The Russians*

2011

HD video, 8 min 57 s

Private collection

*Mother Holding a Plum*,  
from the series *The Russians*

2011

Colour photograph, 100 x 134 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

*The Russians* series is inspired by the work of Russian artist Sergey Prokudin-Gorsky (1863-1944), a pioneer in the field of colour photography, who documented the various changes that Russia underwent at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Hannah's project continues down this same path, drawing a contemporary portrait of Russia through encounters with people he met throughout his travels. Despite the linguistic barrier, the artist asked different people if they were willing to be photographed and filmed. His objective was to question the notions of authenticity, pose, and performance associated with documentary photography. Singular because dominated by chance, *The Russians* project was conducted according to the same "relational" approach favored by Hannah, whose work, deeply human, requires the participation of individuals.

## *The Burghers of Seoul*

2006

HD video installation, 9 min 16 s

Collection of the artist.

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

## *The Burghers of Vancouver*

With Denys Arcand

2017

HD video, 15 min

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain

## *Guernica*

2017

Colour photograph, 86,4 x 139,7 cm

Collection of the artist

Courtesy of Pierre-François Ouellette art contemporain