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# NGV NEWS

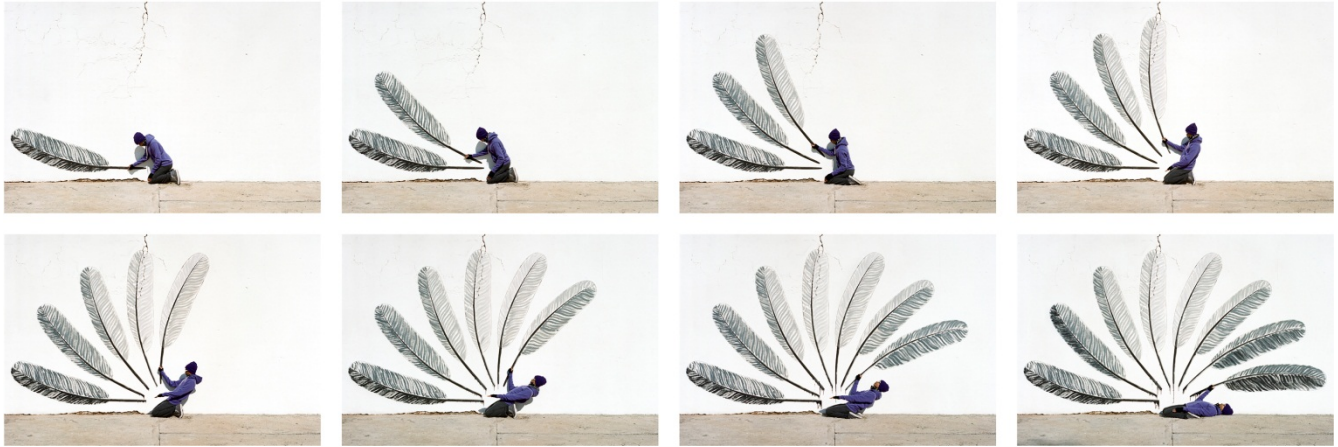
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ngv  
National  
Gallery of  
Victoria

16 April 2013

## Robin Rhode: The Call of Walls

NGV International | 17 May – 15 September 2013 | FREE



Inspired by the streets of Johannesburg, South African-born artist Robin Rhode will present his debut Australian solo exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria in *Robin Rhode: The Call of Walls*. The exhibition also includes an extraordinary space for children (and inspired adults) to participate in the creation of artwork on the walls of the NGV using coloured crayons.

Rhode's distinctive practice uses everyday materials such as chalk and charcoal to draw directly onto Johannesburg's concrete walls, asphalt streets and public places, exploring the act of creative expression while referencing popular culture, graffiti art and the complex history of South Africa. Rhode's work often portrays the artist, or a 'doppelgänger', interacting physically with his two-dimensional wall drawings, transforming cityscapes into three-dimensional imaginary worlds.

Tony Ellwood, NGV Director, said, "Rhode is a multidisciplinary artist who uses the street as a canvas to create highly inventive and often poetic works. We're very pleased to hold his first solo exhibition in Australia and to be the first Australian gallery to stage his wonderful project for children, *Paries Pictus*."

*The Call of Walls* will consist of two gallery spaces – one will display Rhode's engaging blend of fine art, street culture and performance through his photography and animation; while the other will explore the act of drawing through an interactive space especially designed for children and families.

The unique children's space will expand the artist's site-specific project *Paries Pictus*, encouraging people large and small to come together to colour-in an installation of large-scale wallpaper paste-ups using coloured crayons. *Paries Pictus*, named after the Latin term for 'wall drawing', has previously been staged in New York, USA, and Turin, Italy.

Maggie Finch, Curator of Photography, NGV, said, "Despite his current residence in Berlin, Rhode continues to work in and be firmly engaged with his hometown in South Africa. He returns to the streets of Johannesburg to produce much of his work; streets that are marked with the complex histories of a city that has emerged from the period of institutional apartheid to become a vibrant, bustling yet dangerous place."

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*“The Call of Walls* explores Rhode’s long held passion, perhaps even his compulsion, to make marks and carry on the age-old act of drawing onto the surface of walls. His deceptively simple works alter public spaces in significant ways. The physical interaction with these wall drawings, which Rhode then records through photography, transforms simple abstract shapes into narrative sequences that have a gentle, pulsing visual rhythm.”

*Robin Rhode: The Call of Walls* will present eleven of the artist’s recent photographic works and ten of his recent animations.

The exhibition will be accompanied by an illustrated print publication, *Robin Rhode: The Call of Walls*, featuring Maggie Finch’s comprehensive essay outlining the artist’s background and vibrant oeuvre. Available from the NGV Shop in May 2013.

The opening weekend of *The Call of Walls* will coincide with a day of special talks, tours and children’s activities on Saturday 18 May. A diverse public programs calendar, including a film series and sketching program, will continue throughout the duration of the exhibition. For the full program of events, visit [ngv.vic.gov.au](http://ngv.vic.gov.au).

*Robin Rhode: The Call of Walls* will be on display from 17 May to 15 September 2013 at NGV International, 180 St Kilda Road. Open daily, 10am–5pm. Entry is free.

## About Robin Rhode

Robin Rhode was born in Cape Town in 1976 and moved to Johannesburg as a young child. He studied Fine Art at Technikon Witwatersand in Johannesburg, as well as production design briefly at the Association of Film and Dramatic Arts, and since 2000 has exhibited frequently in group and solo exhibitions both in South Africa and internationally. Rhode’s work is held by numerous public collections including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim, New York; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; the Goetz Collection, Munich; and Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa. Rhode currently lives and works in Berlin, Germany.

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Exhibition generously supported by the Joan and Peter Clemenger Trust.

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## Image caption:

### Robin Rhode

South African 1976–, worked in Germany 2002–

*Twilight* 2012-13

digital type C print

(a-h) 41.6 x 61.6 cm (each) (framed)

© Robin Rhode

Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York/Hong Kong

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