



*3 Panels*

2012

Photo transfer on painted wood

Unique, 48" x 54" x 7"

Photo: courtesy Robert Berman Gallery

In "Contenant Contenu" (Containing, Contained), French-born, LA-based artist Marc Fichou plays with conceptual double entendres. His photographs and sculptures explore the process of making in relationship to the object made. This recalls Robert Morris' 1961 work *Box* with the sound of its own making, a quintessential conceptual artwork in which Morris recorded the sounds of building a box, later placing the recording inside the box, looping the sound forever.

In his *Paper on Paper* series (all 2012), photographs Fichou took of hand-folded origami animals and objects are printed onto larger pieces of paper. These prints are then folded to make another copy of the object/animal and later unfolded and framed. The two sets of folds fused in a single image, depict before and after simultaneously. Fichou acknowledges the self-referential nature of his work stating, "my intention here is to create a piece where

the image cannot be separated from its referent, thus creating a visual link between past and present." The monochromatic images--archival pigment prints-- become sculptural, with uneven edges, slight rips and obvious folds. Fichou uses traditional origami subjects, including a seal, shark, raven, wolf and dove, as well as a shell and an octahedron. These paper-on-paper pieces are then interspersed with sculptural *tromp l'oeil* that further explore before and after in the continuum of creation. In *9* (the title refers to the size of the room and not the sculpture), Fichou extracted twelve rhomboid shapes from the gallery's drywall, leaving the studs, wood, and wall structure exposed. He subsequently used them to make a three-dimensional twelve-sided sculpture that inhabits the deconstructed space.

Fichou explores the intersection between photography and sculpture by creating complex puzzles that require the viewer to reconstruct the process of their making. In *3 Panels*, the artist photographed three large, irregular white panels leaning against each other in his studio: they appear to be cut from a single piece of wood, and if reunited they would complete a square. The photographic image was then enlarged and transferred onto the panels shown in the original image. The three pieces sit slightly askew on a shelf on the gallery wall becoming a work that is a sculptural photograph and a visual illusion. Exploring the traditional realm of visual illusion while building off the conceptual and technological advancements of recent decades, Fichou's innovative works employ both digital and analogue technologies to offer striking conceptual and physical juxtapositions.