

ARTFORUM

Janek Simon

RASTER

ul. Wspólna 63

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Janek Simon's current solo exhibition, "People with the heads of dogs," is as much a reflection on the phenomenon of travellers' confabulations about their journeys as it is a study of the self. The title refers to a passage from Marco Polo's *Description of the World* (ca. 1300), one of the travel accounts most notorious for blurring lines between fiction and reality. In the show, the story is recalled via a work sharing the exhibition's title that features a series of colorful figurines straight from a 3-D printer. The artist is a traveller himself, as evidenced by his trip to Antananarivo to create *Polish Year on Madagascar*, 2006. Now, he further explores the poetics of travel in a video and installation titled *Mr. Seven*, 2013. It depicts a man he encountered in the city of Auroville in India, who recounts to the camera an imaginary life story that involves celebrities and superheroes. Simon, who perceives Mr. Seven as his alter ego, in turn plays with his own life narrative via several other strategies, for instance by displaying objects he encountered while travelling—such as a dried exotic lizard and a Polaroid found in a shipwreck—on shelves he made with metal and MDF. He also presents an untitled series from 2015 where he tells the story of multiple heartbreaks in a visual code—gracefully merged features of advanced electrical circuits diagrams and neoplastic compositions—whose meaning is known only to himself.



Janek Simon, *Mr. Seven* (detail), 2012/2015, mixed media, dimensions variable.

— Sylwia Serafinowicz

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