

## MINNEAPOLIS

### LEE KIT Walker Art Center

“Who sees me naked, and who spends time alone with me in the bathroom? Johnson & Johnson. Nivea.” This is how Lee Kit, Hong Kong’s representative at the 2013 Venice Biennale, discusses the personal hygiene product logos in the paintings that unassumingly populated his Walker exhibition, “Hold your breath, dance slowly”: as bespeaking a level of comfort and intimacy, while also hinting at the ways in which commercial interests infiltrate our living spaces. These paintings—faint and IKEA readymades, implicated the viewers in the installation, casting their silhouettes on the gallery walls and floor. In several cases, when viewers attempted to look at the paintings up close, their shadows blocked the video projections, throwing the paintings into darkness. “Hold your breath,” in fact, seemed meant to be experienced not by close, attentive viewing but ambiently, in the manner that we experience the rhythms of the everyday.

Lee, if we take him at his word, is not a political artist. Instead, his work deals with the private and the domestic. But in twenty-first-century Hong Kong, the domestic *is* political. “Hold your breath” appeared to echo the concerns of the 2014 Umbrella Revolution, an activist eruption in Lee’s hometown that was fueled, in part, by frustration among young citizens over high housing prices, which prevent many of them from moving out of their parents’ apartments. In the face of the speculative housing market that has brought Hong Kong to the point of crisis, Lee’s work emphasizes the human side of residential real estate, as spaces in which to live.

—Godfre Leung

