

## Walter & Zoniel: Alpha-Ation

Unknown Writer, 5 November 2015

Walter & Zoniel, a young London-based artist duo, will present a unique performance-practice titled Alpha-Ation, during Art Basel in Miami Beach 2015.

Alpha-Ation features the artists' colossal hand-built camera, characterised by its 1850's brass lens, to produce a series of exclusive portraits of high profile figures akin to gigantic Polaroids. The photographs are shot directly on to positive paper so that each artwork is unique having no negative or possibility of reproduction. The images are then intricately hand-coloured and gilded with 24ct gold in the artists' personal style, 'iconising' their subjects, and eventually forming an individual sculptural alterpiece. Each piece is both an exquisite work of intricate beauty reflecting on the process that brought the subject to where they are and a meditation on the modern day relationship with 'the portrait'.

Through their practice Walter & Zoniel capture a unique and alternative perspective of each of their subjects. The unusual photographic process requires an exceptionally long exposure time (up to 20 seconds), which allows the duo to capture an honesty and intensity of the sitter's eyes in each piece they create. The works allude to iconography juxtaposing their subjects against an unmasked expression of presence and being, which questions the modern conceptions and uses of photography. This simultaneously provides the viewer with both an intense and insightful connection to the subjects' humanity and their portrayal as an 'ultra-being', opening a body of questions about our current relationships with, and proliferation of, 'the portrait' in modern day life.

Walter & Zoniel have been collaborating and exhibiting internationally since 2008. Multidisciplinary in their practice, they work with a variety of mediums including sculpture, photography, film and performance. Their work focuses on visually charming and enticing the viewer into a momentary

<https://wsimag.com/art/18163-walter-and-zoniel-alpha-ation>

escape, whilst questioning and dealing with the human condition. Previous projects also centre on utilising scientific process and pioneering the modern development of early photographic techniques, whilst their large-scale installation works use surrealism or fun as a primary tool.