

# Jasper de Beijer

## The Admiral's Headache

April 10 - May 15, 2021



**Asya Geisberg Gallery** is proud to present "The Admiral's Headache", the fourth solo exhibition of photographic works by **Jasper de Beijer**. The new series expands on the artist's familiar themes of Dutch colonialism and the way that the media romanticizes, simplifies and conflates history and cultural attitudes. De Beijer chooses subjects for their strong visual mythology, and past series have included mythical encounters between natives and explorers in the jungles of Brazil, the Dutch East Indies, and contemporary Africa. In each series, the artist becomes steeped in research and image collection both on the ground and at home. De Beijer then combines digital sketching, drawing, 3D modeling, and sculpture to create stand-alone photographs. Every object in this series is first designed in a game-modeling software, then printed as a flat 2D blueprint, cut out and folded, and finally reconfigured as 3D paper miniatures on a scale-model landscape. The photographs in this series reference 18th-century hand-colored engravings, and from a distance could be colonial illustrations. But upon closer viewing, the meticulous hand-drawn lines are imbued with an eerie sci-fi quality. The tell-tale clues of the cut paper reveal themselves: creases and folds in costumes, or some remains of glue visible in the clouds.



*The Admiral's Headache: "Galjoen", 2018*  
C-Print  
43" x 43"  
Edition 6 of 7 + 1AP

The title "The Admiral's Headache" refers to the story of Albert Kikkert, the former admiral and Governor of Curaçao in the early 1800's. Kikkert complained that the white facades of the buildings shining in the sun exacerbated his migraines, and ordered that they all be painted the bright shades typical of Curaçao's waterfront today. During de Beijer's residency in this former Dutch colony, the artist collected research, focusing primarily on the methodical approach to slavery and capital extraction. De Beijer depicts a desolate, surreal and industrial realm - an island riddled with fantastic machines waiting to be involuntarily powered by extracted human labor. Intrigued by the unique modular, hermetic character of its buildings, ships, tools, and weapons, de Beijer recreated a world where the colonists are hidden players, present but unseen behind imposing mansions. The artist describes the Dutch as being kept comfortable and safe inside the walls, "like an impenetrable cultural cocoon". The hard shell of the fortress protected the famed Dutch gezelligheid - a coziness, warmth, and conviviality - and kept out anything unseemly or dangerous, much like the reality of slavery's exploitation could be ignored while living within the Dutch simulacra.

The stripped-out colonialist lurks around Curaçao with a ghost-like omnipresence, appearing in traces of puffs, gunpowder shots, or magical smoke emanating from fired cannons. But the enslaved people who powered every aspect of this island are left entirely unseen, haunting our collective imagination. De Beijer's intention is not so much to give a moral judgment on colonialism, but to transform its particularly Dutch aspects into oneiric tableaux.



*The Admiral's Headache: "Carriage", 2019*  
C-Print  
43.31h x 43.31w in  
Edition 3 of 7 + 1AP

*Jasper de Beijer attended the Amsterdam Hogeschool voor de Kunsten, and the Hogeschool voor de Kunsten Utrecht. He has exhibited widely throughout Europe and the United States. De Beijer has an upcoming retrospective solo exhibition at the Museum Rijswijk (Fall 2021), and is a recipient of the 2020 Agnes van den Brandeler Museum Prize. Previous solo exhibitions include: The Center Photographique Rouen, France; Flatland Gallery, Netherlands; Wiels Museum, Netherlands; The Hague Museum of Photography, Netherlands; the Museum of Contemporary Art in Denver; Museum Het Domein in Sittard, Netherlands; the Museum de Hallen Haarlem, Netherlands; Galerie Nouvelles Images, The Hague, Netherlands; TZR Galerie Kai Brückner, Dusseldorf, Germany; Hamish Morisson Gallery, Berlin, Germany; The Empire Project, Istanbul, Turkey; and Studio d'Arte Cannaviello, Milano. He has participated in group exhibitions at Art Brussels, PAN Amsterdam, Photo Basel, and Paris Photo. De Beijer's work has taken him to residencies at the Centre Photographique in Rouen, France; the Pompgemaal Den Helder Residency in Amsterdam, Netherlands; WIELS Institute in Brussels; The Instituto Buena Vista in Curaçao; and Kamiyama AIR in Japan. He is part of a large number of collections, including The Bank of America Collection, Collection Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, The Hague, and the Rabo Art Collection, Utrecht. His work has been reviewed by Het Parool, The Woven Tale Press Magazine, Vice Magazine, The New York Observer, Artnet News, and Time Out New York, among numerous others.*