



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**From Figuration**

**February 12 – March 23, 2013**

Private View February 11 6pm – 8pm

Opening hours Tues – Sat 10am-6pm

Skarstedt Gallery is pleased to present the exhibition *From Figuration*, a group show featuring work by George Condo, Thomas Schütte, Juan Muñoz, Peter Fischli and David Weiss, Jonathan Meese, Rosemarie Trockel, Rebecca Warren, and Paul McCarthy. With eight sculptures by a

selection of important and diverse contemporary artists, *From Figuration* explores how figuration is reinvigorated, embracing notions of effect and spectacle to convey emotion, satire, mortality and metaphor.

In *Totemic Personage*, 2012, George Condo pushes notions of traditional figuration to reveal his vision of humanity. Preoccupied principally with the representation of human thoughts and emotions, he depicts multiple facets of a personality in a single portrait creating an effect he has dubbed as 'psychological cubism'. Thomas Schütte's fascination with human presence is evident in *Vater Staat, dressed (Father State)*, 2010. With his use of scale, an imposing figure is somehow diminished, he is authoritative yet also frail, wrapped in a cloak which is a vestige of power and yet which also binds his arms.

Juan Muñoz is also fascinated by the power of simple human presences, a master of orchestration and placement he choreographs single and multiple groups of figures to create enigmatic moments frozen in space and time. *Krefeld Dwarf*, 1989, one of Muñoz's most celebrated sculptures inspired by Velásquez, stands purposefully alone, his 'otherness', creating a wide distance between the spectator and the subject. A reversal takes place where the spectator becomes the object to be looked at.

The viewer also becomes the one who is on view, with Paul McCarthy's *Picabia Idol*, 1997: A three-dimensional representation of a two-dimensional, nonexistent sculpture depicted in Francis Picabia's painting *Femme a L'idole*, 1940-43. Picabia and McCarthy play with the theme of the idol and the admirer but in the absence of the admirer in McCarthy's sculpture we fulfill that role and are beckoned into the primitive idol's dark lap.

Rosemarie Trockel's *Gewohnheitstier 2 (Reh) (Creature of Habit 2 Deer)*, 1990 challenges our preconceived notions of the habitually fleeing deer by confronting us with a stationary inanimate object. The expression 'creature of habit' also evokes our tendency to humanize animals, to attribute our feelings and intentions to them. Examining interrelationships between humans and animals, Trockel confronts us with the unexpected, forcing us to question our own mortality, as the deer becomes a metaphor for death and dying.

Working collaboratively since 1979, Peter Fischli and David Weiss explore the representation of modern transportation in *Stewardess*, 1989. By using unfinished, stark plaster as their material, they make both an observation about the mundanities of everyday life and provide a blank canvas on which the viewer can project their own feelings about contemporary travel.

Just as Fischli and Weiss recall a familiar social figure, Jonathan Meese invokes a historical figure in *Napoleon I*, 2006. In its execution, however, the work lacks realistic form and functions more as a visual representation of an idea. Often referencing violent dictatorial figures, Meese seeks to make nonsense of their atrocious histories and via this deconstruction, make fresh sense of their actions.

Ranging from the amorphous to more clearly recognisable forms, Rebecca Warren's sculptures, like *Fascia V*, 2012 create a bold new figure for the female nude. Her subject is one of the most traditional in art history, but she subverts the inherited clichés associated with the genre, redefining what sculpture should be or should look like. With their earthy and unfinished look, they unveil a tension between thought and process, while creating a unique, new sculptural mode.

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