

HAUSER & WIRTH

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Press Release

Paul McCarthy PROPO

Hauser & Wirth Zürich
1 September – 20 October 2012
Opening: Friday 31 August 6 – 8 pm

'Between 1972 – 1983, I did a series of performances which involved masks, bottles, pans, uniforms, dolls, stuffed animals, etc. After the performances these objects were either left behind or they were collected and stored in suitcases and trunks to be used in future performances. In 1983, the closed suitcases and trunks containing these performance objects were stacked on a table and exhibited as sculpture. In 1991, I opened the suitcases and trunks photographing each item. The group of photographs in their entirety was titled PROPO'.

– Paul McCarthy

Hauser & Wirth is delighted to present an exhibition of over 60 photographs by Paul McCarthy. This selection, many of which have only been seen before in publications, is taken from the artist's large group of more than 120 photographs, collectively known as 'PROPO'.



McCarthy's debased and dirtied photographic subjects have a unique history. They began as props in McCarthy's early performances, and in the early Eighties, they were packed into suitcases and trunks, which were then stacked on a table and re-invented as the sculpture 'Assortment, The Trunks, Human Object and PROPO Photographs' (1972 – 2003). The lids of the cases remained unopened until the early Nineties when McCarthy individually photographed each of the props, creating 'PROPO', a collection of documentation-style photographs and a record of his dark humour and subversive social critique. Set against vividly coloured backgrounds, these grimy objects line the walls of Hauser & Wirth's ground floor gallery, presented as proud emblems, despite their sodden and soiled appearance. The 'PROPO' photographs highlight McCarthy's on-going re-visitation

of his prolific oeuvre and his distinctive approach to his works: they are in a constant state of transformation.

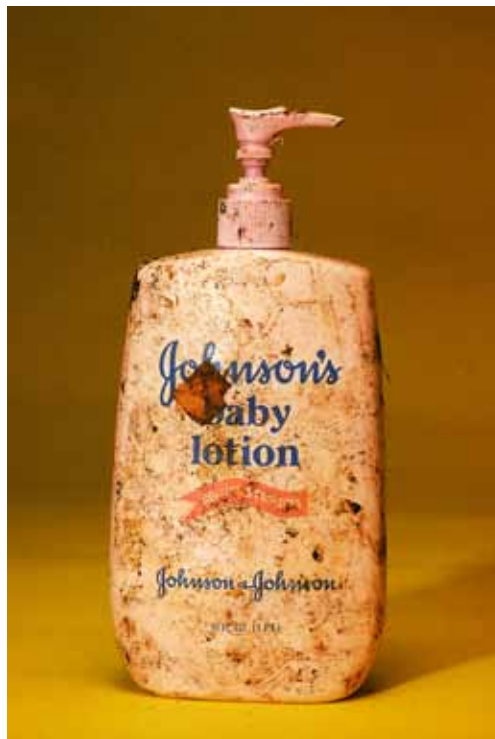


McCarthy began his live performances in the late Sixties. Seen initially by only a handful of people, these were raucous, riotous parodies of society, relationships, sex and pop culture, which tested the physical and mental boundaries of both the viewer and the artist. Videos of two of McCarthy's most well-known early performances, 'Sailor's

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Meat' (1975) and 'Tubbing' (1975), as well as photographs taken during the performances, will be on view in the basement gallery of Hauser & Wirth Zürich.

Born in 1945 in Salt Lake City, Utah, Paul McCarthy is one of the most important and influential contemporary American artists. McCarthy's numerous solo exhibitions include 'The Box', currently on view at the Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin, Germany (Until 4 November 2012); the artist's first transatlantic exhibitions, 'The King, The Island, The Train, The House, The Ship' and 'The Dwarves, The Forests', which opened respectively at Hauser & Wirth London and Hauser & Wirth New York in 2011; 'Pig Island', Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Milan, Italy (2010); 'White Snow', Hauser & Wirth New York NY (2009); 'Paul McCarthy – Air Pressure', an exhibition of inflatable sculptures at De Uithof, City of Utrecht, Netherlands (2009); 'Central Symmetrical Rotation Movement – Three Installations, Two Films', Whitney Museum of American Art, New York NY (2008) and the travelling retrospective, 'Paul McCarthy – Head Shop / Shop Head' which first opened at Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden (2006); and travelled to Aarhus Museum of Art, Aarhus, Denmark (2007) and Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (2007 – 2008).



On view in the second floor gallery:
Thomas Houseago
'The mess I'm looking for'
1 September – 20 October 2012
Hauser & Wirth Zürich

Forthcoming exhibitions:
Rita Ackermann 'Fire by Days'
19 September – 3 November 2012
Hauser & Wirth London, Piccadilly

Zhang Enli 'Topology'
27 October – 22 December 2012
Hauser & Wirth Zürich

Phyllida Barlow
5 November – 22 December 2012
Hauser & Wirth New York

Isa Genzken
15 November – 12 January 2013
Hauser & Wirth London, Savile Row

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Orange Lion
1991 (1995)
Cibachrome on aluminium
183 x 122 cm / 72 x 48 in

Assortment, The Trunks, Human Object and
PROPO Photographs (detail)
1972 – 2003
Six trunks containing props from performances 1972 – 1984,
Human Object, stool, plastic bag, wooden and steel table,
photographs
335 x 304 x 122 cm / 132 x 120 x 48 in

Trunks
1991 (2012)
Cibachrome on aluminium
150 x 122 cm / 59 x 48 in

Baby Lotion
1991 (1995)
Cibachrome on aluminium
183 x 122 cm / 72 x 48 in