

Galerie Buchholz
17 East 82nd Street
New York, NY 10028

Lutz Bacher
More Than This

17 February
– 19 March 2022

Press Release

Galerie Buchholz New York presents “More Than This”, an installation by the late American artist Lutz Bacher (1943-2019). This installation is comprised of four different parts: “More Than This”, a sculptural work consisting of 24 large cylindrical segments and joints of industrial plastic tubing distributed across the gallery floor; “Black Forest”, a series of found paintings depicting fragments of bare tree branches in black ink and paint on various lengths of unstretched, irregular canvas installed frieze-like along the top of the gallery walls; “The Singing Life of Birds”, an audio track of field recordings of bird songs slowed down by 25%; and an untitled lighting element programs the gallery’s lighting to dim and rise at intervals throughout each day. This is the first reconfiguration of this work since it was originally shown at Secession in Vienna in 2016.

This show immediately follows Lutz Bacher’s “The Lee Harvey Oswald Interview”, an exhibition at Galerie Buchholz New York from December 9, 2021 – February 5, 2022 which presented a seminal series from the 1970s exemplifying her earliest interests in conspiracy, American mythologies around politics and celebrity, a contentious relationship between photography and language, and a profound suspicion about media and its ability to fix meaning. Over the course of more than four decades, Lutz Bacher’s work expanded from these interests, often revealing in the cast-off or discarded materials of contemporary culture their most cosmic and zoomed-out suggestions and intimations. The plastic tubing in “More Than This” can look like industry or infrastructure in ruins, suggesting bones or joints, but also wormholes or portals or periscopes that might lead to some other dimension. The scroll-like paintings of tree branches can resemble nerve-endings with splattered synapses. The audio track of bird songs with its non-human communication, and the lighting program that cuts the artificial illumination of the gallery, both suggest circumstances that could be either pre-historic or post-apocalyptic.

Uncharacteristically, Lutz Bacher agreed to give an artist talk at the opening of “More Than This” at Secession, in which she discussed early lessons and formative experiences in her artistic life, going back to childhood. A link to the talk is here: <https://vimeo.com/158164383> and for the duration of the exhibition the video will be on view at The Betty Center, Lutz Bacher’s archive located at 57 East 82nd Street and organized by Galerie Buchholz. Appointments are available for further research at The Betty Center by emailing post@thebettycenter.com.

This is Galerie Buchholz’s eighth solo exhibition of Lutz Bacher’s work. In 2021, Lutz Bacher’s work was included in “Stop Painting”, curated by Peter Fischli at the Fondazione Prada, Venice; “Zeroes and Ones” at KW Berlin; “K20/K21 – On Display” at Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf, and “Exhibition as Image” at 80WSE, in New York. In 2020, her work was included in “No Dandy, No Fun” at the Kunsthalle Bern, and “Misfitting Together: Serial Formations of Pop Art, Minimal Art, and Conceptual Art at MUMOK in Vienna, among others. In 2019, The University of California Irvine presented a solo show by Lutz Bacher titled “Blue Wave” at the University Art Gallery, organized by the artist Monica Majoli and curator Allyson Unzicker and developed together with the artist. Also in 2019, the CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art in

San Francisco presented show of new work by Vincent Fecteau which featured key pieces by Lutz Bacher, his long-time friend and collaborator. In 2018, Lutz Bacher mounted three institutional solo exhibitions: “The Silence of the Sea” was the inaugural show at the newly opened Lafayette Anticipations in Paris; “The Long March” at 80WSE New York University, NY, and a large-scale exhibition titled “What’s Love Got To Do With It?” at K21 Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf. Previous solo exhibitions by Lutz Bacher have been held at Yale Union, Portland; 356 Mission Road, Los Angeles; Secession, Vienna; Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen; Kunsthalle Zurich; ICA London; Portikus, Frankfurt am Main; Kunstverein Munich; and MOMA/P.S.1, New York, among others. Her work was also featured in in “Everything is Connected: Art and Conspiracy”, at the Met Breuer, New York; “The Conditions of Being Art: Pat Hearn Gallery & American Fine Arts, co (1983-2004)” at Bard CCS and the Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-On-Hudson; “Other Mechanisms”, Secession, Vienna; “Stories of Almost Everyone”, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; “Mechanisms, CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco; “A Slow Succession with Many Interruptions”, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; “America is Hard to See”, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; “Open Dress”, Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach; “NYC 1993: Experimental Jet Set, Trash and No Star”, New Museum, New York; the 2012 Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and “Spies in the House of Art”, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, among others.

SHOW & TELL

MY FIRST TALK WAS IN KINDERGARTEN –

ONE OF THE ACTIVITIES WAS SHOW & TELL –

YOU WERE TO SHOW SOMETHING & TELL ABOUT IT –

I DECIDED TO DEMONSTRATE MY NEW DISCOVERY OR INVENTION –

THIS WAS A METHOD FOR CLEANING DIRT FROM UNDER YOUR FINGERNAILS –

FIRST YOU SOAP THE PALMS OF BOTH HANDS – THEN SCRATCH YOUR FINGERNAILS ACROSS THE SOAP –

AND MAGICALLY THE DIRT DISAPPEARS !

WHAT TO PAINT ?

PAINTING WAS ANOTHER ACTIVITY –

YOU STOOD FACING A LARGE BLANK PIECE OF PAPER ATTACHED TO AN EASEL –

I PAINTED THE SAME THING EVERY DAY –

FROM THIS I DECIDED I COULDN'T BE AN ARTIST –

SLEEP

THERE WAS ALSO NAP TIME

PUT YOUR HEAD ON THE TABLE & BE QUIET –

ONE DAY I PRETENDED TO BE ASLEEP WHEN THE TEACHER TOLD US TO GET UP –

AND THEN THE TEACHER PRETENDED THAT THE CLASS WAS LEAVING FOR THE DAY –

MISS LOVE

THE TEACHER WAS MISS LOVE –

SHE WAS AN OLDER LADY WITH PEACH COLOR SKIN & HAIR –

WHEN SHE LEFT THE ROOM THE BOYS RAN BACK & FORTH
ON THE LONG TABLES –

I LIKED THAT A LOT !

AFTER KINDERGARTEN I WENT TO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS GRADES ONE THRU
TWELVE -

THE FIRST DAY OF FIRST GRADE I WALKED TO SCHOOL WITH MY OLDER
BROTHER –

WHEN I ARRIVED I REALIZED I WAS SUPPOSED TO BE ACCOMPANIED
BY MY MOTHER –

READING

I COULD ALREADY READ -

FOR SOME REASON I WAS SENT TO READ ALOUD FOR THE PRINCIPAL –

HER OFFICE WAS A GLASS HOUSE IN THE MIDDLE OF A HUGE SPACE –

HER FACE WAS LIKE OLD WORN LEATHER –

IT WAS THE ONLY PART OF HER I COULD SEE –

SHE HAD THAT WHITE BOX NUN HEADGEAR –

AND THE ROUND WHITE BIB -

EVERYTHING ELSE WAS BLACK -

I SAT IN FRONT OF HER DESK & TRIED TO READ –

IT DIDN'T GO SO WELL

CARNIVAL

IN SECOND GRADE I WAS SENT TO PAINT A GIANT BACKDROP FOR THE SCHOOL CARNIVAL –

MY PLAN WAS TO PAINT A SEAL WITH HIS TRAINER –

THE TRAINER WAS LIKE A DRUM MAJOR WITH A TALL FUR HAT A RED JACKET TIGHT WHITE PANTS & BLACK BOOTS –

THE TRAINER WAS HOLDING A LONG WHIP –

I DID QUITE WELL WITH THAT PART OF THE PAINTING BUT HAD TROUBLE WITH THE SEAL –

BECAUSE OF THE SHAPE –

THE HUGE BLACK BLOB GOT WORSE & WORSE AS I TRIED TO FIX IT

AND HIS COAT WAS SUPPOSED TO LOOK SHINEY & WET BUT I COULDN'T GET THAT EFFECT –



THE ROAD

THERE WERE FREQUENT ROAD TRIPS WITH MY FAMILY –

ALL OVER THE US & CANADA –

MY FATHER WAS A BASEBALL PLAYER –

ONE TIME RIDING IN THE CAR WE WERE GOING UP A HILL FAST –

I WONDERED ABOUT THE ROAD – IF IT CONTINUED ?

THEN I CONCLUDED THAT WHEN YOU GROW UP YOU KNOW THE ROAD CONTINUES –

HOMERUN

ONE OTHER TIME I PREDICTED THAT MY FATHER WOULD HIT 2 HOMERUNS THAT NIGHT –

AND HE DID EVEN THOUGH HE WAS NOT A HOMERUN HITTER

WHAT TO BELIEVE

FAST FORWARD TO EIGHTH GRADE –

RELIGION WAS PART OF THE CURRICULUM –

THERE WERE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS TO MEMORIZE –

I WAS NEVER VERY GOOD AT MEMORIZATION –

BUT THEN I REALIZED WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU BELIEVE FOR YOURSELF?

X

THERE WAS ALGEBRA & I COULD DO EQUATIONS BUT JUST DIDN'T UNDERSTAND – WHAT IS X?

I TOLD MY MOTHER & SHE TOLD THE TEACHER –

THE TEACHER STOOD ME UP AT THE BLACKBOARD & HAD ME SOLVE FOR X –

IN FRONT OF THE ENTIRE CLASS –

THEN SHE SAID NOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND –

OF COURSE I AGREED SO I COULD SIT DOWN –

ORGAN

ONE DAY I WAS IN THE CHURCH ACROSS FROM THE SCHOOL –

THEY WERE PREPARING A FUNERAL –

ALL OF A SUDDEN THE ORGAN WAS PLAYING THE HYMN FOR THE DEAD –

REALLY REALLY LOUD –

AND THE ORGANIST WAS SINGING ALONG –

THE LATIN – DIE ZERIE DIE ZILA –

THE ORGANIST WAS THIS TINY WOMAN NAMED LORETTA –

SHE WAS WAILING AWAY ON THE ORGAN & HER SINGING ALSO THIS
BARITONE BOUNCING OFF THE WALLS -

SHE WAS INVISIBLE UP THERE IN THE ORGAN LOFT –

BUT THEN SHE WALKED DOWN THE AISLE SO THAT I COULD SEE HER -

LAUGHING

SOMEBODY'S MOTHER DIED

ONE OF THE BOYS FROM KINDERGARTEN –

THE CLASS WENT TO HER WAKE –

I SAW HER BODY IN THE CASKET & LAUGHED –

BALLROOM DANCING

WE HAD BALLROOM DANCE CLASSES ON FRIDAY –

WE LEARNED TO WALTZ FOXTROT RHUMBA MAMBO TANGO & JITTERBUG

THE INSTRUCTORS WERE A MIDDLE AGED COUPLE –

THE MAN WORE A TUXEDO – THE WOMAN WORE A DIFFERENT COCKTAIL
DRESS & HIGH HEELS EVERY WEEK – THESE DRESSES ALWAYS HAD BIG
SKIRTS WITH PETTICOATS –

THE MAN WOULD WHIRL HER AROUND AT THE BEGINNING –

THEY ORGANIZED A WINTER & SPRING FORMAL –

MY LAST SPRING FORMAL I WORE THIS STRAPLESS DRESS –

IT DIDN'T HAVE SUPPORT OR STRUCTURE –
AS I WAS DANCING WITH ONE OF THE BOYS FROM KINDERGARTEN
MY TOP WOULD FALL DOWN –

HE WOULD TURN AROUND WHILE I PULLED MY DRESS UP –

THEN WE WOULD CONTINUE DANCING –

HEIDI & THE MAN WITH NO FACE

EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON WE HAD MOVIES IN THE AUDITORIUM –

THEY WERE ALWAYS OLD MOVIES FROM ARTHUR RANK PRODUCTION UK

BLACK & WHITE MOVIES -

THE 2 MOVIES I REMEMBER ARE HEIDI & THE MAN WITH NO FACE [HG
WELLS / THE INVISIBLE MAN]

WE NEVER FINISHED THESE MOVIES –

MOST OF THE TIME THE PROJECTOR WOULD BREAK DOWN –

THE MOVING IMAGE WOULD SPUTTER & STOP WHILE THE SOUND WOULD
FADE AWAY –

ACT LIKE A LADY

FINISHING 8TH GRADE THERE WAS A NEW PRINCIPAL –

SHE CAME TO CLASS TO GIVE OUT THE FINAL REPORT CARDS –

THE WHOLE TIME I WAS MAKING FACES AT HER –

I WAS CALLED TO HER OFFICE –

SHE TOLD ME TO ACT LIKE A LADY –

HIGH SCHOOL

UNIFORMS

WE WORE A UNIFORM WHICH WAS A GOOD SOLUTION FOR MY FASHION
CHOICES AT THAT TIME -

BOOK REPORT

WE HAD TO GIVE AN ORAL BOOK REPORT IN FRONT OF THE ENGLISH CLASS -

THE BOOK I CHOSE WAS A BIOGRAPHY OF GROUCHO MARX -

I HADN'T REALLY PREPARED ANYTHING TO SAY -

I JUST KEPT SAYING - THIS BOOK IS SO FUNNY & THEN I COULDN'T STOP LAUGHING BECAUSE ONE OF THE GIRLS WAS MAKING FACES AT ME !

SHE COULD MOVE HER EYES UP & DOWN IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS -

DON'T THINK

ONE TIME AT LUNCH I WENT TO THE WRONG RESTROOM & WAS TAKEN TO THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE -

I STARTED TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT HOW THERE SHOULD BE A GIRLS ROOM AVAILABLE -

MY DEFENSE BEGAN WITH I THINK -

I WAS INTERRUPTED & TOLD DON'T THINK -

THE COGITO

SOMEWHERE I HEARD ABOUT I THINK THEREFORE I AM -

THAT SEEMED UNLIKELY BUT INTERESTING -

THERE WAS ALSO THE FOREST -

IF A TREE FALLS IN THE FOREST & NO ONE IS THERE -

DOES THE TREE FALL -