

Balancing Act

13.04.22

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MASSIMODECARLO is pleased to present *Balancing Act*, a group exhibition that brings together the work of contemporary artists Nobuyoshi Araki, Monster Chetwynd, Thomas Houseago, Lee Kit, Elad Lassry, Matthew Monahan and Paloma Varga Weisz.

Analyzing the points of connection between different contemporary voices, MASSIMODECARLO writes a new chapter of the investigation begun in 2019 with *MCMXXXIV*, the inaugural exhibition of the gallery's new headquarters in Milan, Casa Corbellini-Wassermann. The exhibition also continues the dialogue started with the show *Bodywork: Discomfort and Existence* housed in 2021.

Balancing Act is a repertoire of attention to corporality, where the human body is used as a form of investigation in painting, sculpture, and photography. The artists in the exhibition, using different approaches and techniques, are all driven by the representation of the body, whether enlarged, torn, fragmented, symbolic, recomposed, covered or uncovered. The body is always under pressure to address and reflect on structures of power and social relationships.

Paloma Varga Weisz's ceramic sculptures, here shown for the first time, are purposefully unfinished. This exceptional body of work alludes to the process of metamorphosis beneath the glassy surfaces of the artist's imaginary characters. Varga Weisz's hybrid archetypal creatures evoke fairy tales and folklore and possess subconscious symbolism.

Lee Kit's signature pastel palette and discrete works are enigmatic reflections on the habits and actions that shape our everyday life. In his paintings, Lee Kit reveals the aura that surrounds ordinary objects, and by including the titles of the works in the surface of his multilayered paintings, he draws a personal notebook of quotidien gestures.

Thomas Houseago's inspection of organic materials, such as wood and hemp with plaster and iron, create anthropomorphic and totemic sculptures resulting in a cross-pollination of high and low references. His sculptures are presented in dialogue with **Monster Chetwynd's** miniature series dedicated to bats. Bats

are nocturnal animals which the artist identifies as *ecowarriors*: essential players in the planet's biodiversity, and subsequently the survival of humanity.

Elad Lassry appropriates the visual vocabulary of fashion photography and campaigns to question the boundaries of different aspects of visual culture. By using a commercial aesthetic in his photography, Lassry creates a new obscure lexicon that responds to the profusion of images in our contemporary world.

The sculptural bronze collages by **Matthew Monahan** are anti-monumental representations of human bodies under tension. By combining references to archeology with a sharp contemporary vision, Monahan represents the world as a ruin in which the memories of the past intertwine with the visions of the future.

In the exhibition Monahan is in dialogue with a series of black and white erotic photographs by Nobuyoshi Araki. For this body of work, Araki intervenes with black ink directly on the surface of the photograph, realizing truly unique images that combine different artistic mediums and materials.

NOBUYOSHI ARAKI
MONSTER CHETWYND
THOMAS HOUSEAGO
LEE KIT
ELAD LASSRY
MATTHEW MONAHAN
PALOMA VARGA WEISZ

Nobuyoshi Araki was born in Tokyo in 1940, he lives and works in Tokyo. Selected solo exhibitions include Nobuyoshi Araki, Galeria Javier López & Fer Frances, Madrid, Spain; Impossible Love – Vintage Photographs, C/O Berlin, Germany; Umegaoka Elegy, Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo, Japan (2019); Montrous Paradise, RuArts Gallery, Moscow, Russia; Kata-Me, Rat Hole Gallery, Tokyo, Japan; Love-Dream, Love-Nothing, Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo, Japan; Hana Jinsei (Flower – Life), Over the Influence, Los Angeles, USA; The Eros Demon, De Primi Fine Art, Lugano, Switzerland (2018). Selected recent group exhibition include Survived, Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo, Japan; Neko Project, IBASHO, Antwerp, Belgium; My Garden of Eden, Christophe Guye Galerie, Zürich, Switzerland; Japanese Art of the 1980s and 1990s. Part I, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, USA; Through the Looking Glass, TorchGallery, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Now is the time, Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg, Germany.

Monster Chetwynd was born in London in 1973; she lives and works in Glasgow and Zurich. Her solo shows include: Monster Chetwynd: Free Energy (The Life of Nicola Tesla), Studio Voltaire, London; Bat Opera, MASSIMODECARLO, Hong Kong (2021); Monster Rebellion, Villa Arson, Nice, France; Toxic Pillows, De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg, Netherlands (2019); The owl with the laser eyes, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Torino (2018); The Science Lab & The Green Room, Art Basel Parcours, Basel (2017); Dogsy Ma Bone, Tate Exchange, London (2017). Her recent group shows include: Ruhr Ding: Klima, Urbane Künste Ruhr, Bochum (2021); 16th Istanbul Biennial, İstanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, İstanbul (2019); Experience Traps, Middelheim Museum, Antwerpen (2018); Now, National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh (2018); Tate Exchange, Liverpool Biennial Tour, London (2017).

Thomas Houseago was born in Leeds, UK in 1972. He lives and works in Los Angeles. Selected solo and duo exhibitions include Gagosian, London (2021); Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels (2021); Xavier Hufkens, Brussels (2020); Royal Academy, London (2019); Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris (2019). Selected group exhibitions include Gagosian, Paris (2020); Grand Palais, Paris

(2017); Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (2017).

Lee Kit was born in Hong Kong in 1978. He lives and works in Hong Kong. Recent solo exhibitions include: *The Gazing Eyes Won't Lie*, MASSIMODECARLO Hong Kong & MASSIMODECARLO VSpace, (2020); *Casa Masaccio*, San Giovanni Valdarno, Italy (2018); Hara Museum, Tokyo (2018); *Something you can't leave behind*, MASSIMODECARLO, Hong Kong (2017); *Lee Kit: Hold your breath, dance slowly*, Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis (2016). Group exhibitions include: *All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France (2017); *The City, My Studio / The City, My Life*, Kathmandu Triennale (2017); Jing Shen. *The Act of Painting in Contemporary China*, PAC Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, Milan (2015).

Elad Lassry was born in Tel Aviv, Israel in 1977, he lives and works in Los Angeles. Solo exhibitions include Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam (2013), The Kitchen in New York (2012), the PAC – Padiglione di Arte Contemporanea in Milan (2012), the Kunsthalle in Zurich (2010), the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York (2009) and at the Art Institute in Chicago (2008). Group shows include: *Perfect Likeness*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2015), Photo Poetics, Guggenheim Museum, New York (2015), *A World of Its Own: Photographic Practises in the Studio*, Museum of Modern Art, New York (2014); *Off the Wall*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2012).

Matthew Monahan was born in Eureka, USA in 1972. He lives and works in Los Angeles. Solo exhibitions include: Artzuid Amsterdam Sculpture Biennial, Amsterdam, (2019); *Mensbeeld (human image)*, The Rabo Art Collection, Museum Kranenburgh, Bergen (2017); *Matthew Monahan*, Museo Nazionale Romano in Palazzo Altemps, Rome (2016). Group shows in prominent institutions include: Villa Chiuminato, Turin, (2021); *Contemporary dialogues with Tintoretto*, curated by Ludovico Pratesi, Galleria Giorgio Franchetti alla Ca' d'Oro, Venice (2018); *The Trick Brain*, curated by Massimiliano Gioni, Aishti Foundation, Beirut

(2017); *Exquisite Corpses: Drawing and Disfiguration*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2012). Matthew Monahan's work was shown in 2009 at the 53rd Venice Biennial, *Il Palazzo Enciclopedico*, curated by Massimiliano Gioni.

Paloma Varga Weisz was born in Mannheim in 1966, she lives and works in Düsseldorf. Selected solo exhibition include: *Glory Hole*, Le Consortium, Dijon, France curated by Éric Troncy (2020); *HOMEWORK #5: HOMEWORK*, Sadie Coles HQ (2020); *Bumped Body*, Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, England (2020); *Bumped Body*, Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht, Netherlands; *Multiface*, Berlin, Germany; *Wundergestalt*, Gladstone Gallery, New York NY, USA (2019). Group exhibitions include: *REPEATER*, Sadie Coles HQ, Kingly Street, London, England; *HDTs: The Searchers*, High Desert Test Sites, Joshua Tree CA, USA (2022); *Cracked*, Tristan Hoare, London, England; *Fourth Plinth Shortlist Exhibition*, The National Gallery, London, England (2021); *MOUNT KAPLAN*, Angles Mewes Gallery, Berlin, Germany; *- a breath? a name? - the ways of worldmaking*, Biennale Gherdëina 7, Ortisei, Italy; *Jubel Jubel - Es rolle der Rubel*, Tiefkeller, Bonn, Germany (2020); *HOMO FABER. Craft in Contemporary Sculpture*, ACC Creation, Asia Culture Center, Gwangju, South Korea; *The Enigma of the Hour: 100 Years of Psychoanalytic Thought*, Freud Museum, London, England (2019).