

METRO PICTURES

Olaf Breuning: The Art Freaks Opening Reception September 23, 5-7 PM

Metro Pictures is pleased to present Olaf Breuning's *The Art Freaks*, a group of color photographs transposing the signature styles of seminal 20th-century artists into prosaic body painting. If the manners in which Breuning's subjects have been painted are not immediately identifiable, then titles like *Andy*, *Frieda*, and *Piet* confirm their references. Stemming from the artist's recent investigation into his idiosyncratic relationship with modern and contemporary art, the larger than life-sized prints of elaborately painted bodies, which comprise *The Art Freaks*, conflate the tropes of so-called high and low artistic techniques as they discuss notions of kitsch, cliché, and reproduction.

As Breuning humorously attempts to imitate Takashi Murakami's character *Kiki* (Takashi [2011]) or the mounting release of Edvard Munch's *The Scream* (1893) in *Edvard* (2011), he also mimics street performers who paint their bodies to transform into unique characters for the amusement, and pocket money, of passers-by; a tantamount treatment of craft, medium, and cultural signifiers that pervades Breuning's multifarious oeuvre. Whether through his drawings, sculptures, or well-known website, the specific brand of pastiche Breuning employs in his work is a decidedly indiscriminate one that draws on everything from the Easter Bunny to Andy Warhol's *Marilyns*.

Both humorous and uncanny, *The Art Freaks* not only questions our relationship to the enduring artworks Breuning chooses to reference in his series, but also to the reproductions and consumable patina through which most of us experience these artists' works and their distinctive aesthetics.

An iteration of *The Art Freaks*, with banners hanging from the lobby ceiling of the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, is currently on exhibition. Other one-person exhibitions include: Kunstmuseum Luzern; Migros Museum, Zurich; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Chisenhale Gallery, London; and the Swiss Institute, New York. His work was included in the 2008 Whitney Biennial, New York, and he has exhibited in group shows at S.M.A.K./Museum of Fine Arts, Ghent; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; and Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona. Olaf Breuning was born in Switzerland and lives and works in New York and Zurich.

www.olafbreuning.com