

Anton Kern Gallery

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mark Grotjahn

Painted Sculpture

September 10 – October 29, 2015

August 11, 2015—In his fourth solo exhibition at Anton Kern Gallery, painter and sculptor Mark Grotjahn presents a new body of painted bronzes. This is the first gallery exhibition to further elaborate upon the artist's 2014 sculpture presentation at the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas.

In a radical act of transformation, Grotjahn takes the most casual throwaway material, the cardboard box, and turns it into the most solid and noble of art mediums: the pedestal-mounted bronze sculpture. With their rough cutouts for eyes and mouths, glued-on cardboard tubes and toilet paper rolls for pipe-like noses, and ripped cardboard surfaces for texture and definition, these assemblages resemble primitive, child-like masks. Cast in bronze, Grotjahn paints them in decisive hues of green, purple, and red, inflected with smaller doses of other colors that are applied in gestural, expressionistic trails of paint and chromatic networks. Elevated on pinewood pedestals, the masks function simultaneously as paintings and as three-dimensional objects.



The mask or the grotesque face, a central although not always visible motif in Grotjahn's painting and drawing practice from the beginning, has broken out of the flat surface into a three-dimensional form, and thereby freed the artist from the need to adhere to any face-like verisimilitude in the painting process. Grotjahn's painted sculptures have become true hybrids—not mere combinations of two techniques, but rather unprecedented crossbreeds. They add an unparalleled step to the genealogy of modern art and of painted sculpture in particular, entering a dialogue with modernist concepts of the found object, the assemblage and welded sculpture (Pablo Picasso, Julio González) as well as non-Western-art-inspired objects and masks (Henri Matisse, André Derain, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner). Grotjahn is creating paintings without pictorial reference that are yet deeply rooted in the ancestry of the mask as an object of ritual, reflection and analysis of the unconscious.

An accompanying exhibition catalogue, published by Distanz, will be available in late 2015.

Mark Grotjahn was born in 1968 in Pasadena, California. He received his MFA from the University of California, Berkeley, and his BFA from the University of Colorado, Boulder. His work has been presented in solo exhibitions at the Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, TX; Kunstverein Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany (both 2014); Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO (2012); Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR (2010); Kunstmuseum Thun, Thun, Switzerland (2007); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (2006); and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA (2005). His work is in the collections of The Broad Art Foundation, Santa Monica; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland; Dakis Joannou Collection, Athens, Greece; De La Cruz Collection Contemporary Art Space, Miami; Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines; François Pinault Collection, Venice, Italy; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C.; Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Rubell Family Collection; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Tate Modern, London, UK; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

The exhibition will open on Thursday, September 10, and run through Thursday, October 29, 2015. The gallery is open Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am-6 pm. For further information and images, contact the gallery at 212.367.9663 or email: jasmin@antonkerngallery.com.

Upcoming Exhibition: Jim Lambie (November 7 – December 19, 2015)

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