

# HAUSER & WIRTH

23 SAVILE ROW LONDON W1S 2ET 196A PICCADILLY LONDON W1J 9DY  
TELEPHONE +44 (0) 207 287 2300 FACSIMILE +44 (0) 207 287 6600

## Press Release

## Paul McCarthy The King, The Island, The Train, The House, The Ship

Hauser & Wirth London, Savile Row and Piccadilly  
16 November 2011 – 14 January 2012

Opening: Tuesday 15 November, 6 – 8 pm

Hauser & Wirth is proud to present an exhibition of major new works and some of the most significant sculptures and installations by Los Angeles-based artist Paul McCarthy, including the ambitious 'Pig Island'. Spanning both the Savile Row and Piccadilly galleries, this exhibition showcases the highly developed themes and interrelationships coursing through McCarthy's complex practice.

Combining political figures and pop culture, 'Pig Island', on view at Savile Row, is a morally deviant world populated by pirates, cowboys, the likenesses of George W. Bush and Angelina Jolie, an assortment of Disney characters and the artist himself, all carousing in a state of wild and reckless abandon. The island is constructed from blocks of polystyrene piled high with wood, cast body parts, clay, spray paint and old fast food containers surrounded by a sea of blue carpeting.



Over a seven year period, 'Pig Island' grew to fill McCarthy's studio, blurring the boundaries between the work and the workplace. It evolved from an accumulation of detritus and half-finished figures into a sculptural installation: every detail of the seemingly chaotic work meticulously positioned as if it were a carefully orchestrated film set, complete with film lighting. Unlike the picture-perfect Disney fairytales McCarthy so often references, 'Pig Island' flaunts its unfinished state and mechanisms, enabling the viewer to catch a glimpse of the artist's process, the organic development of his sculptures and the rawness of a never-ending work-in-progress.

Described by McCarthy as a 'sculpture machine', 'Pig Island' has given birth to numerous large-scale sculptures, including 'Train, Mechanical': a mechanical sculpture showing twin pot-bellied caricatures of George W. Bush



sodomising two pigs. Each of the figures performs a choreographed set of actions – their asses move rhythmically back and forth, their mouths open and close, their heads spin and, when approached, their heads and beady eyes follow the viewer around the space.

'The King' presides over the main space of the Piccadilly gallery. This new monumental installation consists of a platform surrounded by large-scale airbrush paintings that were created on the easel that stands on the platform. Atop the platform is a throne upon which a silicone model of McCarthy sits stark naked with partly severed limbs, closed eyes and wearing a long blonde wig. Church pews arranged in front of

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the stage give the viewer a place to sit and contemplate the artist's elevated status as they gaze up at his wooden throne.

McCarthy has been making mechanical sculptures as an extension of his performance-based art since the early nineties. His new mechanical work, 'Mad House Jr.', is an adapted version and, at the same time, a maquette of 'Mad House' (2008), first shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art. 'Mad House Jr.' is a small room-like cube with windows and a doorless entry. Like a miniature amusement park ride, the cube shakes and spins rapidly whilst a small camera installed inside the cube records all of its movements. This footage is then projected into the space, creating an environment of physical and mental disorientation.



For over four decades, Paul McCarthy has produced a body of work that bridges a variety of media and pushes the boundaries of contemporary culture – exploring issues of consumerism, pop culture and the underbelly of the American dream. Hauser & Wirth presents the first transatlantic show of McCarthy's work with two different exhibitions on view simultaneously at Hauser & Wirth's New York gallery and both London galleries.

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 '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). McCarthy's 'Piccadilly Circus' was the inaugural exhibition at Hauser & Wirth's Piccadilly gallery in 2003.

McCarthy currently lives and works in Los Angeles CA.

### Forthcoming exhibitions:

#### Paul McCarthy

'The Dwarves, The Forests'  
7 November – 17 December 2011  
Hauser & Wirth New York

'The Historical Box. Curated by Mara McCarthy'  
19 November 2011 – 14 January 2012  
Hauser & Wirth Zürich

Mary Heilmann  
Michael Raedecker  
10 February – 17 March 2012  
Hauser & Wirth London, Savile Row

Press Contact:  
Kristina McLean, [kristina@suttonpr.com](mailto:kristina@suttonpr.com)  
+44 207 183 3577

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### Full Copyright and Courtesy Credits:

Pig Island  
2003 – 2010  
Mixed materials  
1067.5 x 915 x 518.5 cm / 420 1/4 x 360  
1/4 x 204 1/8 in  
© Paul McCarthy  
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth  
Installation view, 'Pig Island', Fondazione  
Nicola Trussardi, Milan, Italy, 2010  
Photo: Marco De Scalzi

Train, Mechanical  
2003 – 2009  
Steel, platinum silicone, fiberglass, rope,  
electrical and mechanical components  
276.9 x 152.4 x 566.4 cm / 109 x 60 x  
223 in  
© Paul McCarthy  
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth  
Photo: Fredrik Nilsen

The King  
2006 – 2011  
Multimedia installation; Acrylic on canvas  
stretched over board, wood stage, lighting, life  
cast, 4 pews  
Overall footprint: 6.20 x 12.20 x 8.45 m / 20' 3"  
x 40' x 27' 7"  
© Paul McCarthy  
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth  
Photo: Fredrik Nilsen