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DIAGONAL BUILDING, MAAG AREAL
ZAHNRADSTR. 21, P.O. BOX, CH-8040 ZURICH
OPENING HOURS: TUE-FRI 10-6, SAT 11-5

SCULPTURE NOW | DOUG AITKEN, MARTIN BOYCE, JOE BRADLEY, ANGELA BULLOCH, VALENTIN CARRON, TRISHA DONNELLY, MARIA EICHHORN, MATIAS FALDBAKKEN, URS FISCHER, PETER FISCHLI & DAVID WEISS, SYLVIE FLEURY, LIAM GILICK, DOUGLAS GORDON, MARK HANDFORTH, ALEX HUBBARD, KAREN KILIMNIK, ANDREW LORD, RICHARD PRINCE, GERWALD ROCKENSCHAUB, UGO RONDINONE, DIETER ROTH, EVA ROTHSCHILD, STEVEN SHEARER, JOSH SMITH, OSCAR TUAZON, FRANZ WEST, SUE WILLIAMS | JUNE 11 2011 - JULY 30 2011

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Gallery Eva Presenhuber is pleased to announce the group exhibition «Sculpture Now» showing new works of 27 artists of the gallery. The art works in the exhibition have been arranged by the artists Peter Fischli and David Weiss.

Doug Aitken

Doug Aitken's «NOW» offers a fascinating combination of image and text. The word's meaning is illustrated by the image of the three letters thrown back at the viewer by their mirrored surfaces. This interplay of word and image evokes a reflection in the true sense of the term, understood both as an image returned by a mirror and as thought, scrutiny and insight. This piece is part of Doug Aitken's series of works using light-boxes that combine writing with photography, celebrating a disconcerting interplay of image and text.

Martin Boyce

In a chain almost 35 metres long, Martin Boyce presents a group of twenty different-sized lanternlike objects at regular intervals and alternating between red, blue and yellow. For a long time, many of Boyce's works have been shaped by a conspicuous interest in combining artificial light sources, their design, and the distinctive possibilities they offer for heightening atmospheres. «When now is night» (1999), for example, takes the geometric pattern of a spider's web and traces it using neon tubes. In 2003, Boyce realized «Our love is like the Flowers, the Rain, the Sea and the Hours», in which neon tubes become tree-like structures, and in 2007 the leaves of his concrete trees became actual lampshades. Boyce's new work also plays with the contrast between constructive-geometrical design and the richly associative effects of the lantern chain, an item that is familiar around the world. This time leaving the light out Martin Boyce strongly concentrates on the structural aspects and presents a work of a sometimes fragile sculptural quality.

Joe Bradley

At first glance, Joe Bradley's two- by three-metre multi-panel painting consisting of seven monochrome canvases looks like an experiment in Minimalism. On closer examination, the arrangement of the panels reveals figurations and forms of crudely rendered figures whose reduced quality evokes both the pixelated aesthetic of early computer games, as well as primitive totem sculptures. In every direction the works of Joe Bradley know how to deal with this scope. The monochrome surfaces of his paintings, often realized on prefabricated canvases, gather their very own denotation through Bradleys arrangements and their subtle, narrative titles often dealing with 20th century's arthistorical developments and ironically playing with the many artistic approaches between abstraction and figuration.

Angela Bulloch

The oeuvre of Angela Bulloch is characterized by an engagement with the functioning of control systems and ordering principles that organize our behaviour and structure our surroundings. In the work on show here, «RYBW Three Speed», the artist uses a section of the structure of Bridget Riley's painting «White Discs II», a white canvas with black circles; on closer inspection, one identifies three different sizes of black circles that appear to be systematically ordered, but which are in fact not arranged according to any plan. «RYBW Three Speed» adopts this structure with four illuminated spheres in different colours following three different dimmer rhythms dictated by the artist.

Valentin Carron

Severed bluntly, just below the knee, two feet in worn-out socks stand in the middle of the room. Valentin Carron's works in dichroic glass and translucent lacquer are immediately perplexing. Leafing through the artist's book «Learning from Martigny» (2009), one finds a very similar image: the photograph shows the artist's foot and lower leg, wearing a woollen sock and tattooed with a square. As a reference image, we see a wrought iron window grille with small squares where the bars intersect. As if wishing to inscribe himself physically in his work, Carron replicates and comments not only on objects of everyday culture, like the window grille, but also on himself. Tongue-in-cheek, he addresses his existence as an artist, thus allowing himself to become entangled in his own game. «einHorn» (uniCorn), a work from the series of the same name consisting of one piece for each letter of the title, is borrowed from the artist's immediate environment: the twisted square-section rod protruding vertically into the space can be found in various places as a classic decorative element in villa architecture. Whereas in that context they are elements of pseudo-craftsmanship, in Carron's work they become an autonomous sculptural statement.

Trisha Donnelly

The works of American artist Trisha Donnelly have always possessed an all-encompassing mysteriousness. They have rarely been described in eye-opening terms or inserted into contemporary discourse; her oeuvre is too diverse, ranging from videos, drawings, text pieces, sound installations and photographs through to memorable performances, resisting all attempts at interpretation. In sculpture, Donnelly has for some time been working with marble, a material with an enormous art-historical charge. Donnelly takes a finely chiselled approach to her material, leaving behind both delicate traces and large-

scale shape-giving interventions.

Maria Eichhorn

Maria Eichhorn's years of conceptual and analytical engagement with the "art operating system" and its institutions are evident in the work on show «Tüten mit Schachteln» (Bags With Packets). The work consists of two large bags in which Eichhorn has arranged packets, some of them collected from local people, thus exploring the relationship of her work to time and place. At first glance, Maria Eichhorn's works don't appear in the traditional sense as art. Her challenging works are based where boundaries become blurred and where the relation between art and reality is changing.

Matias Faldbakken

Matias Faldbakken's «squeeze sculptures» work with the deformation of existing material. They are the expression of an artistic praxis in which the gesture of refusal and a subtle play on negation become points of departure for innovation. In this approach, key roles are played by provocation, aggression, reduction and abstraction: items of everyday use are deformed, stripped of their function and, thus negated, elevated into the art context: filing cabinets or clothes lockers are tightly strapped and squeezed to such an extent that they lose their original function and become sculptural objects in the museum space.

Urs Fischer

With his new works, a large series first shown in late 2009 in his «Marguerite de Ponty» exhibition at the New Museum, New York, Urs Fischer places the viewer inside an all-embracing hall of mirrors. All manner of objects, be it fluffy ducks, office chairs, dolls houses, or bath sponges, often greatly enlarged, are photographed from all four sides and from above. Screen-printed onto highly reflective surfaces and then reassembled as cubes, the objects float as if caught in giant ice cubes, some distance above the floor. In this way, Fischer deprives all the objects of their proper size and relativity. The glass Pinocchio, probably small in reality, grows into an imposing sculpture, facing a penny farthing bicycle that may have been reproduced to scale. Ultimately, each viewer must work out the dimensions for him or herself, inevitably always getting in his or her own way.

Peter Fischli and David Weiss

«There's nothing to see here – we're still setting up» – five plinth-like cubes lie stacked in the exhibition space, a few planks lean casually against them, the lighting also still needs doing. The seemingly rather carelessly made plinth sculptures by Peter Fischli and David Weiss are already right where they belong. One can look at them, one can touch them, they are what they are, and they're not what they seem. They may be carved out of polyurethane, but they remain an assertive presence. From the outset, Fischli and Weiss have focussed their attention on everyday objects and their astonishing diversity. As a result, their working materials and subject matter are to be found everywhere; used with apparent self-evidence, they inhabit a new reality. Fischli and Weiss have been carving sculptures out of polyurethane since 1982, with the first three series entitled «Fieber» (Fever), «Metaphysische Skulpturen» (Metaphysical Sculptures), and «Floss» (Raft). After 1992, they made further polyurethane works, all displayed as large-scale installations giving glimpses of a world of the seemingly hidden and nonetheless entirely present.

Sylvie Fleury

Sylvie Fleury is known for her staging of and subtle commentary on glamour, fashion and the luxury items of the modern consumer world of beautiful appearances. Her often large-scale works critically reflect a world of commodities which are brought into the art context as readymades, but which can also be read as engaging with the origins of Pop Art in the 1960s. The point of departure for Fleury's objects and installations is the physical surface of objects, which she substantially alters, thus giving the object not only a new appearance but also a new material value of its own. As well as this playing with altered surfaces, another of Fleury's trademarks is referencing and experimenting with the language of advertising and fashion magazines.

Liam Gillick

When, in the mid-1990s, Liam Gillick cooperated with Danish architect Jeppe Aagaard on a proposed new design for the marketplace in the Swedish town of Kalmar, no one could have predicted the far-reaching consequences it was to have on his artistic work. The central issue here is the question of what the workers from a car factory would do after their place of work was closed. The assumption that they would not submit to joblessness, returning instead to continue the production process under their own direction, led to a design for a utopian living and working environment. In this context, «A view constructed once they have stopped...» (2011) refers to the possibility of standardized landscape design. Lined up on the wall, we see a whole range of silhouettes which, combined with one another, enable a view out of the factory into an expanse of countryside.

Douglas Gordon

The hand is a recurring motif in the work of Douglas Gordon. In 1997, Gordon made his black-tattooed finger the focus and eponymous hero of his work «Three inches (Black)». Two years later, «Feature Film» concentrated on the enlarged hands of a conductor, and «The left hand doesn't care what the right hand isn't doing» articulates Gordon's understanding of the hand as a symbol for many types of human action and behaviour. «Left not right» (2007) is a solid gold life-size version the artist's own hand. Here, the single fragile hand taken out of its usual context stands in strange contrast to the material used, which speaks of security, strength and exclusivity.

Mark Handforth

The main role in Mark Handforth's works is always played by simple things everyone knows. No one would pay them any further attention, and it is precisely this self-evident quality that Handforth uses to permit them a new form, a new existence. In its deformation, the simple bent wire object on which he modelled «Coathanger» is first stripped of any functionality and then, as an outsize replica, inserted into a new field of meaning.

Alex Hubbard

Alex Hubbard's «Weekend Pass» presents a flat-screen monitor mounted vertically on a specially designed plinth. Using an approach based on doubling, the sculpture stages sculptural work in the video. In turn, the video centres on a freestanding plinth circled by a steadily panning camera. While the camera make its leisurely round, various objects in a range of materials are given a dignified presentation on the plinth by the sometimes visible artist in the spirit of an aesthetic of the performative, before being unexpectedly demolished.

Karen Kilimnik

Karen Kilimnik came to prominence in the early 1990s with her large-scale installations, the scatter pieces – heterogeneous objects on a specific theme associatively gathered into a theatrical semantic whole. During the 1990s, she made mostly sketch-like drawings, some traversed by lines of thin watercolour, revolving around themes of a world saturated with media fantasies, commented on acerbically by the artist in scribbled quotations between gossip, headlines and journal entries. In the mid-

1990s, she began producing figurative pictures in oil whose expressive romantic gesture bespeaks the artist's playful engagement with cultural history and the tradition of painting. In a subjective process of appropriation, the repertoire of motifs borrowed from idyllic landscapes, fairytales, fashion and the media industry is idiosyncratically transposed into worlds of dreams and utopian longing on which these sumptuous works full of sentimentality are based.

Andrew Lord

British sculptor Andrew Lord works mainly with plaster, a classic material with a unique fragility. In his highly distinctive formal idiom, Lord uses this material to capture similarly fragile moments of everyday life. It may be a cloth seeming to hang casually from a nail in the wall, or, as in the case of «River Spodden at Healey Dell II», a waterfall, freestanding in the space, its masses of water plunging into the depths. Many of Lord's works are created as a process of remembering. Because he gives his imaginary images a new but recurring form, they constitute a kind of mental and physical map. Often, this map extends to the reproductions of fragments of his own body. In «my cupped hands as the reservoir, Cowm», the two elements are combined: the cupped hands in the title suggest a landscape feature from the artist's own past, the Cowm Reservoir near Lord's native Whitworth.

Richard Prince

The work entitled «Grease Lightning» belongs to the «Car Hood» series (since the late 1980s), in which Richard Prince paints on the hoods of American muscle cars from the 1970s in the spirit of Appropriation Art, hanging the resulting works on the wall as sculptural paintings. Like Prince's entire oeuvre, this work is shaped by his interest in the trivial myths of American everyday culture. Prince critically reflects the seductive power of culturally coded status symbols; with his works situated in the context of postmodern strategies of appropriation, he rethinks the concepts of authorship and property.

Dieter Roth

Dieter Roth's oeuvre in many media is characterized by a remarkable breadth and diversity. It includes not only époque-making artist's books, drawings, paintings, sculptures, assemblages and installations, but also concrete poetry and literary texts as well as experiments with film, music and photography (mostly Polaroids). The branching, sprawling output of this universal artist of the 20th century is shaped by incorruptible individualism. In the early 1960s, after an intense phase of engagement with the concrete art of the 1950s, Roth began experimenting with low-quality and perishable materials like chocolate and rubbish, as shown in the multiples from the 1970s.

Eva Rothschild

Like Eva Rothschild's work in general, the piece on show here refers to common notions of abstraction, representation and decoration. Influenced by the formal repertoire of minimalism, her object worlds play with the tradition of elementary shapes such as circle, square, sphere and triangle. The formal idiom developed by the artist is characterized by clarity and rigor of composition, with the magic and enigmatic quality associated with the rational art of Minimalism. Accordingly, the aluminium ring clad in golden leather seems to float freely in the space. The use and juxtaposition of different materials such as leather, plexiglas, metal, wood and paper are a central aspect of the artist's work.

Gerwald Rockenschaub

Gerwald Rockenschaub's paintings of the 1980s based on simple shapes, pictograms, and clearly defined colour schemes can be situated within the Neo Geo movement, referring to abstract geometrical artistic styles of the 20th century. In the late 1980s, Rockenschaub increasingly turned away from painting, while retaining the artistic method of formal reduction in his brightly coloured screen prints on plexiglas, minimalist objects and installations. He also adopted modern technologies in the process of developing and producing the works: the works are planned on the computer, while the objects are produced by specialist companies. The use of industrial materials and mechanical production procedures recall design development processes, highlighting the way the artist operates across borders. «Untitled 2011» consists of three rectangular base plates, which are entangled into each other, thus opening a multifaceted frame of reference.

Ugo Rondinone

Ugo Rondinone will be showing new sculptures from his ongoing «still life» series (since 2008). These works are full-size reproductions of humble everyday items, fruit, or found objects, cast in bronze and filled with lead. These in some cases multipart works constitute a coherent group, as shown in the way they are displayed: the six pine cones laid out on the floor, for example, form an equilateral triangle. The titles of the works are equally telling: the seven pears that make up «still.life. (seven pears in a line)» are displayed in a line. As the term «still.life.» suggests, the sculptures represent a closed, captured moment – isolated and weighted down with lead.

Steven Shearer

One year before Steven Shearer first realized his installation «Toolshed» in an exhibition at Galerie Eva Presenhuber, the shed had already provided the central motif for a so-called «Archive» picture. In «Toolshed Study», Shearer applied his trademark approach, grouping a large number of pictures of these typical garden sheds (found almost exclusively online) around an image of a teenager playing electric guitar. The juxtaposition of a conformist, idealised and clichéd idea of play with a teenage «rebel» and his true interests reflects a central aspect of Shearer's oeuvre. «Toolshed II» addresses similar issues: sparse light is seen coming from the slightly open door of the shed replicated by Shearer. At regular intervals, a piercing guitar sound slices through the silence of the exhibition space and its semblance of peace and quiet.

Josh Smith

Josh Smith's «Stage Painting» recalls an earlier group of works, the «Name Paintings». As in these well-known works, featuring the artist's name as the central motif in endless variations that acts as a structuring element against the abstract background, the installation on show presents Smith's name in black letters on a white canvas, lit by spotlights, on a stage. With this over-inflation of his signature, this equation of motif and name, he reflects a central myth of modern art.

Oscar Tuazon

There is a central concrete wall in the work by Oscar Tuazon which, if approached from the front, suggests a fundamental plan: such a wall at the front, another further back, connected by two side walls, and one has a description of the classical room of western architecture. But here there is just one wall. Walking round behind it, all plans fall apart: the load-bearing beams which merely allude to a spatial volume have all come out of joint. With the lightness of dancing legs, the structure acquires the flexibility and playfulness characteristic of Tuazon's works. In this way, his interventions have often succeeded in calling existing traditions into question and offering plausible alternatives.

Franz West

Franz West's decision to work in three dimensions is coupled with the idea of using sculpture to make possible a world that can be experienced and used in every respect. Based on this idea, he made his first

«Passstücke» (Adaptives), objects that each individual could relate to his/her own body as s/he pleased. He later made items of furniture for use in the private domain which, when exhibited in an institutional context, also raise the question of their status as art. Since the mid-1990s, West has been working on large-format outdoor sculptures, initially in sheet metal and later in aluminium, whose entirely abstract forms either serve a function, offering somewhere to sit, or are placed on a plinth, denying the viewer any direct contact.

Sue Williams

Since the mid-1980s, Sue Williams has been living and working in New York, where she soon became known to a wide public with her painting which at first still displayed a strong narrative influence. In journal-like scenes of domestic violence and sexual obscenity recalling trivial picture stories like comics and caricatures, the artist acts out her personal anger over the continued existence of sexism as a social norm. Working primarily in the medium of painting, she soon established a very strong and distinctive artistic position. But with *Flesh House* we are showing a work, which, realized in the mid nineties, shares its theme with the above-mentioned works and bringing her painterly position into relation with the field of sculpture and installation.

For further information please contact Björn Alferts (b.alferts@presenhuber.com) or Florian Keller (f.keller@presenhuber.com) at Galerie Eva Presenhuber.

Exhibition views, works on display