

Urs Fischer
The Kiss

01 February – 11 March 2017
 1 Davies St London W1
 Tuesday – Saturday, 11 – 6pm

Urs Fischer's 2017 exhibition at Sadie Coles HQ will centre on a large-scale replica of Auguste Rodin's *The Kiss*, cast in white Plasticine. The famous image of embracing lovers will morph and fragment over the course of the exhibition through the interventions of visitors, who will be free to remould the Plasticine at will. The image of an entwined couple also appears in a group of four new paintings, in which the artist uses classic movie stills as stock visual formulae – found images to be disrupted and redeployed.

Over the space of a month, Fischer's Plasticine sculpture of *The Kiss* will transform from a recognisable motif (fractionally larger than Rodin's first marble version) into an open-ended site of collaboration. The icon of modern sculpture will become a volatile object – able to be inscribed, pulled apart and remodelled spontaneously. The kissing figures are raised on a Plasticine pedestal onto which visitors will be able to climb, so as to become part of the sculptural group – transposed into the work of art.



Fischer's version of *The Kiss* centralises the idea that an existing image of beauty, an art-historical 'given', can be destabilised and reformed through the agency of individuals. Each act of intervention turns the original model into something new: by starting with a fixed image, Fischer draws attention to the contingent processes of distortion and adaptation. In contrast to his participatory clay works of the past five years, which gradually crumble, or the wax-candle sculptures which dissolve over the course of an exhibition, the Plasticine model of *The Kiss* can be continually reshaped. Each state is equal to the next: the sculpture passes through multiple phases without order or hierarchy.

The four paintings on display upstairs extend the subject addressed in the sculpture. Three works reproduce the same classic film still in a large-scale panoramic format. Silkscreened on top of the scene are horizontal streaks of colour, originally drawn with an oil stick and photographed at high resolution. The magnified, zooming bands run off either side of the picture, interrupting and partially effacing the cinematic image. In the fourth work, the coloured marks plunge vertically across another couple, shot in black-and-white. In each painting, a condensed and confected moment is overrun by a surface 'weather system' of line and colour. Fluid, unbounded gesture transcends the artificial confines of the picture. As with the Plasticine sculpture, a recognisable image is inscribed with new potential, turned into malleable material.

Urs Fischer (b. Switzerland, 1973) lives in New York. Recent major exhibitions include *Small Axe*, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2016); *False Friends*, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva (2016); a survey exhibition at MOCA, Los Angeles (2013); *Madame Fisscher*, Palazzo Grassi, Venice, Italy, 2012; and *Skinny Sunrise*, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, 2012. He has had solo shows throughout Europe and the USA, including *Oscar the Grouch*, The Brant Foundation, Greenwich (CT) (2010) and *Marguerite de Ponty*, New Museum, New York (2009). In 2004, *Not My House Not My Fire* took place at Espace 315, Centre Pompidou, Paris, and the retrospective *Kir Royal* was held at Kunsthau Zürich, Switzerland. Urs Fischer's work has been included in numerous group exhibitions including the Venice Biennale in 2003, 2007, and 2011.

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