

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Juergen Teller
Teller ga Kaeru

Curated by Francesco Bonami
Blum & Poe, Tokyo
February 4 – April 1, 2017
Opening Reception: Saturday, February 4, 6-8 pm

A donkey? How strange! Yet it is not strange. Any one of us might fall in love with a donkey! It happened in mythological times.

— Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Idiot* (1869)

Blum & Poe is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new work by Juergen Teller, curated by Francesco Bonami. This is the artist's first solo presentation in Japan in twenty-five years.

Teller first made his mark on the public's consciousness when his iconic pictures of Kurt Cobain were published in *Details* magazine in 1991. Thereafter, his first solo exhibition took place in Japan at Shibuya PARCO, Tokyo, in 1992, where he showed portraits and early fashion photographs. The following year he was the recipient of the 1993 Photography Prize at Festival de la Mode, Monaco. Since then Teller has collaborated with the world's leading fashion designers including Marc Jacobs, Vivienne Westwood, Comme des Garçons, and Helmut Lang. The candid and casual nature of his work appears random yet it is based on precise planning and staging. This tension is evident in the bizarre scenario created for this exhibition, which debuts a new series of photographs depicting frogs on plates. As Francesco Bonami envisages it:

"'Once upon the time in a suburban neighborhood of an irrelevant country, people did not eat frogs but kissed them and made love with them' — this could be the beginning of a fairy tale written by Juergen Teller while imagining this exhibition where frogs turn into a small crowd of viewers looking at the three main characters of the exhibition: the gentleman with the gorilla, the lady with the fox, and the man with the donkey. Teller's gift is not just to tell, with images, a simple story but in fact is the ability to turn extraordinary people — charismatic and curmudgeonly photographer William Eggleston, ethereal and myth-like actress Charlotte Rampling, and his own barbarian self — into normal people on the verge of a magical breakdown. The exhibition is built as a conversation and an encounter between the community of frogs and these three people with their own counterparts in the animal world."

Juergen Teller was born in 1964 in Erlangen, Germany. He studied at the Bayerische Staatslehranstalt für Photographie in Munich, and has lived and worked in London since 1986. His work has been exhibited extensively around the world: his solo exhibition *Enjoy Your Life!*, which was held at the Kunsthalle Bonn in 2016, is currently on view at Galerie Rudolfinum, Prague until March 19, and will travel to Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin, from April 20 to July 3, 2017.

Recent solo exhibitions include *The Clinic*, Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin (2015); *Macho*, DESTE Foundation, Athens (2014); *Woo!* Institute of Contemporary Art, London (2013); *Touch Me*, Le Consortium, Dijon (2010), which traveled to Daelim Museum, Korea (2011); and *Man with Banana*, Dallas Contemporary, Texas (2011). Francesco Bonami has worked with Teller since 2012, when he organized Teller's first solo exhibition in Italy, *The Girl With the Broken Nose*, at

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the Palazzo Reale in Milan. In 2014, Teller held a two-artist show with the legendary Japanese photographer, Nobuyoshi Araki: *Araki Teller Teller Araki*, at the Ostlicht, Vienna. He was also one of five artists to represent Ukraine in the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007. Teller's work is represented in numerous public collections including the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris; International Center for Photography, New York; National Portrait Gallery, London; Pinchuk Art Centre, Kiev; and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

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