

Press Release

Fractured Figure Works from the Dakis Joannou Collection

September 6, 2007 – July 31, 2008



Fractured Figure - Works from the Dakis Joannou Collection is the new Deste Foundation project that reflects, with its concept, scope and synergies, both, the way an increasing number of artists are viewing the human form and the way that very different but equally legitimate realities comprise our experience of the world.

As, the exhibition's curator, Jeffrey Deitch notes, "if every period in art can be characterized by an approach to figuration that reflects the prevailing sense of the human condition, *Fractured Figure* represents a sense of cultural dysphoria, a state of dissatisfaction and anxiety, the opposite of euphoria. The new figural form is ruptured and deteriorating. It is fragile, just like real people.

An aesthetic of death is pervasive, challenging the robust optimism that had come back into art after a period of abjection. ... Reality has overtaken simulation. Instead of a conceptual construct, the new approach to the figure reflects the real challenges faced by real people. Rather than idealized or fantasized forms, figures are fractured, exploded, broken, and imperfect. The victim of the suicide bomber now rivals the fashion victim as a subject for contemporary figuration.

The new approach to the figure is more about the real world than the ideal world. The artist is looking to the street and to current events rather than to the firmament. The new figuration is not about the sublime, or about philosophy of form. It is responding to world where optimistic assumptions about peace and progress have been overwhelmed by political, economic and environmental challenges. ... A search for truth, after years of being derided as an anachronistic and misguided pursuit in a world where there is no absolute truth, might actually be coming back to art. This truth is a different kind of truth, however. It is fragmented, complicated, and multi-sided, not absolute. ...

The *Fractured Figure* is un-slick. It is usually handmade rather than professionally fabricated, although a number of the artists pursuing this theme have developed studios with a cadre of assistants. ... There are deliberately rough edges and a preference for distressed materials. Decay and deterioration are encouraged. Bodies are not self-contained but often break the boundary with the outside and are interconnected. Figures are often "agglutinated," built up from trash and disparate elements rather than modeled from a solid block of material. Collage is the over-riding formal language. ... The cyborg figure that heavily influenced the figurative art of the previous decade has been disabled by a computer virus. It is the viral side of the Internet that is becoming more operative as it becomes overwhelmed by cultural waste. Much of the interesting new art is retro-techno rather than high tech.

In the aftermath of 9/11 and the Iraq war, the question is often asked, "Where is the political art?" The most compelling new art is not political in a propagandistic way. It is not strident and pushing for a platform in the political discourse. The work is more personal and reflective of a state of mind.

The work is political in a more profound way. The Fractured Figure bears artistic witness to a fractured world and calls for a renewed embrace of humanity”.

The exhibition will feature known as well as new works by artists such as : **Pawel Althamer, David Altmejd, Janine Antoni, assume vivid astro focus, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Ashley Bickerton, John Bock, Maurizio Cattelan, Paul Chan, Dan Colen, George Condo, Nigel Cooke, Roberto Cuoghi, Folkert De Jong, Nathalie Djurberg, Anastasia Douka, Haris Epaminonda, Urs Fischer, Barnaby Furnas, Robert Gober, Matt Greene, Tim Hawkinson, Adam Helms, Elliott Hundley, Chris Johanson, Martin Kippenberger, Terence Koh , Jeff Koons, Nate Lowman, Mark Manders, Paul McCarthy, Matthew Monahan, Takeshi Murata, Wangechi Mutu, Tim Noble & Sue Webster, Cady Noland, Chris Ofili, Poka-Yio, Richard Prince, Georgia Sagri, Aurel Schmidt, Gregor Schneider, Tino Sehgal, Dana Schutz, Kiki Smith, Christiana Soulou, Francine Spiegel, Andro Wekua, Ralf Ziervogel .**

The exhibition is curated by Jeffrey Deitch with Massimiliano Gioni as curatorial advisor. Exhibition design by Urs Fischer with the participation of Patrick Arnold, Jeffrey Deitch, Massimiliano Gioni and Dakis Joannou.

Nadja Argyropoulou is the project coordinator.

A book edited and designed by Urs Fischer with Cassandra MacLeod accompanies the exhibition.

Book design collaboration and publication: Scipio Schneider.

Assistant to Scipio Schneider: Mia Marfurt

Two other publications are created as part of the exhibition's project-like character:

Christiana Soulou's numbered edition, titled *Fractures* and Roberto Cuoghi's flip book, titled *DOA DAKIS*.

Exhibition credits also include:

Cecilia Alemani: editorial coordinator

Ali Subotnick: curatorial advisor

Eugenia Stamatopoulou : installation manager

Natasha Polymeropoulos : book and catalogue copy editor

Marina Vranopoulou : assistant project coordinator

Stavroula Tseva, Regina Alivisatos: administration

Special thanks are due to Maurizio Cattelan for his advice and inspiration.

Yorgos Tzirtzilakis, advisor to DESTE and Xenia Kalpaktsoglou, director of DESTE have contributed to the project's realization.

An extension of the *Fractured Figure - Works from the Dakis Joannou Collection* exhibition will be presented in the Foundation's Yellow Room gallery, from April 2008 onwards.

For press information contact:

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Opening hours:

Until the end of April: Thursday & Friday, 12:00 – 20:00

Saturday, 12:00 – 18:00

From May until July: Wednesday & Thursday 17:00 – 20:00

Guided Tours

The program of guided tours for the exhibition *Fractured Figure. Works from the Dakis Joannou Collection* is as follows:

Thursday – Friday – Saturday: 13.00 – 14.00

&

16.00 – 17.00

During the exhibition's opening hours the public will have the opportunity to attend 10 minutes presentations of specific exhibition works or rooms. These presentations will vary each day and will be announced every day at the exhibition's entrance.

Schools and/or other large groups which may be interested in arranging a guided tour outside the programmed ones should please contact DESTE in tel.: +302102758490 or email: info@deste.gr

The guided hours and presentations are conducted by trained DESTE personnel and are free of charge as also is entrance to the exhibition.