

PRESS RELEASE

SKIN

GHADA AMER
MARY CARLSON
TONY GARIFALAKIS
DENNIS KARDON
MARO MICHALAKAKOS
YASUMASA MORIMURA
SHIRIN NESHAT
TANJA OSTOJIC
TONY OURSLER
GERARD PASCUAL
JEANNE SILVERTHORNE
JANICE SLOANE
KIKI SMITH
MARC QUINN

19 October - 4 December 1999

Curator: Andrea Gilbert

The global visual-art terrain of the last three decades is dominated by work on the human body and related issues of selfhood and identity. The exhibition *SKIN* focuses specifically on how art about the body is played out on the body's wrapper. Skin is our largest organ. Its vast and paradoxical physical and symbolic properties literally hold the body together and outwardly define us. *SKIN* presents the work of 14 artists from a spectrum of cultures – including both emerging and established artists ranging in age from 27 to 53. Each uses the body's 1.7 sq. m. elastic surface in a different way to explore issues about the body. *SKIN* displays approximately 30 works dating from the 90s and encompasses all current art forms and media.

Touch as it relates to perception is summoned by French artist **Gerard Pascual's** Braille and photographic constructions. Egyptian-born **Ghada Amer** explores touch as an erotic sensation on the skin of her canvases. Furniture and objects imprinted with the touch of their users' skin are **Maro Michalakakos'** vehicles of myth and memory.

Several artists play with the properties of skin and our conceptions of appearance. Australian artist **Tony Garifalakis'** relentless close-up lens challenges ideals of beauty, while **Jeanne Silverthorne's** magnified skin reliefs chart the body's unknown terrain. **Janice Sloane's** photographic constructions exploit skin's paradoxes by juxtaposing biology with sensuality, attraction with repulsion.

How skin performs the politics of identity is the domain of a number of artists. **Yasumasa Morimura** transforms his skin's appearance and hence his sexual, cultural, political and temporal identity. In the photographic and video work of Iranian-born **Shirin Neshat**, issues of gender and space in Islam are conveyed through metaphoric battles upon female skin. As a 'living sculpture', **Tanja Ostojic**, a young Serbian performance artist, uses her own exposed skin to create a refuge from artistic and political turmoil.

SKIN explores the psychological and spiritual properties residing in the skin. New York painter **Dennis Kardon** works through his anxieties of intimacy by focusing on the skin of his models. **Tony Oursler** projects an assortment of contemporary neuroses onto the skin of his familiar effigies. The physical and spiritual fate of **Marc Quinn's** sculptural bodies is determined by the absence or presence of their skin, while in **Mary Carlson's** "body coverings", the body of the self has shed its skin and moved on. Finally, **Kiki Smith** "cuts and sews" skin surfaces into a patchwork quilt of vulnerability, pain, living and dying immortalized in cast aluminium.

Taken together, the art and performance documents of *SKIN* comprise a compelling examination of the textures of being and the body at the end of the 20th century.

For more information contact Natasha Polymeropoulos or Fivos Sakalis on +301 6729460.

Opening hours: Monday - Friday 11 am - 12 midnight, Saturday 12 noon - 4 pm, Closed Sundays