

press information

September 2007

Urs Fischer

LARGE, DARK & EMPTY

September 8 to November 17, 2007

Opening: Friday, September 7, 6 – 8 pm

Returning from its summer break, Galerie Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Swiss artist Urs Fischer. On view will be recent medium- and large-format sculptures and a spacious installation work.

The artistic oeuvre of Urs Fischer (born in Zurich in 1973) reveals great wealth and diversity, ranging from mixed media painting, drawing, and collage to graphics (silkscreen, prints), sculpture, and installation. At this year's Biennale in Venice, he represents Switzerland at the church of San Stae, together with Ugo Rondinone. Urs Fischer lives and works in New York.

Fischer's sculptural work frequently deals with the questions of materiality, mass, the classic form, and equilibrium. His pieces oscillate between extraordinary fragility and subtlety on the one hand and highly massive, oversize objects on the other. In his three-dimensional works, we often find everyday objects that are familiar to us, such as tables, chairs, doors, cupboards, washing machines, teddy bears, cigarette packets, or rotting fruit. Urs Fischer lays emphasis on the ordinary, if not trivial things of our day-to-day lives, processing them into something novel, something that is not seldom spectacular. He modifies what is a priori given, using distortion, enlargement, or recomposition. Fischer offers the viewer a new, often humorous look at the 'things of life'.

Another important factor in the work of Urs Fischer besides the material is time. Depending on the materials and their functionalities, the works may change: Parts of them may break off, some may be caught in perpetual motion, others may even start to rot. The artist illustrates the transience of the matter, thereby reviving the traditional *Vanitas* idea.

Once the visitor enters the gallery's rooms, Urs Fischer will literally cut the ground from under his feet. Two entire walls are equipped with floor-to-ceiling mirrors (*Death of a Moment, Birth of a Moment*), set in motion by a hydraulic system. This makes the room appear distorted and fluctuating. The exhibited works are reflected and refracted infinitely by the waving mirrors. It is an overkill of presence, caused by the interaction of matter and immateriality, imagination and fiction, reality and image. The viewer becomes part of the installation. Altering and questioning conventional modes of perception by including the exhibition rooms into the process of creation - the artist has already played with this principle in some of his earlier works, where he has managed, with a keen sense of spatiality, to break through established dimensions: Large passable holes are cut out of the separation walls, thus creating new perspectives ("Urs Fischer - Kir Royal", Kunsthaus Zurich, 2004); exhibition rooms are covered with mirrors, thus appearing umpteen times bigger ("Urs Fischer - Paris 1919", Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 2006); or the entire floor is colored black and pulled up over its edges in an irregular pattern with the aid of stencils ("Urs Fischer - Mary Poppins", Blaffer Gallery, the Art Museum of the University of Houston, 2006). In his past, Urs Fischer has already worked with mirrors, which serve as a means to reorganize and choreograph our visual perception.

The sculpture titled *The grass munchers* is an aluminum cast of the artist's arms and hands representing an open gesture. Three separate, lifelike hands made of wax seem to hold him or pull him in their differing directions. This refers to the necessities of life, to the fact of being pulled to and fro. *abC* shows a small bird standing on a massive lump of rock (cast in

aluminum). A long, large-link steel chain fixed onto the ceiling encloses the tender neck of the bird. Another sculpture, called *The lock*, consists of a subway seat, a white sports bag, and a colorful cake, all cast in polyurethane. By means of an electric magnet, the cake floats and turns around between the seat and the bag.

In other sculptures featured in the exhibition, Urs Fischer triggers an unusual dynamism by combining subjects that would hardly ever be seen in such constellations. These symbioses and interfaces give birth to new objects whose implied functionalities seem to have become void and obsolete. The new form raises the question of its underlying statement, while at the same time unveiling a fascinating and dramatic aesthetic. One of these works unites subjects as different as a washing machine, a ladder, and a pillow (*Thank you fuck you*); another one brings together a washbasin, a skiing shoe, and a long branch (*Fuck you thank you*). One searches for the links and tangential points of such pairs of characteristics – organic and inorganic, hard and soft, angular and circular –, and one finds them both in the attentive and humorous eye that the artist casts on ‘things’ and in the dialog that he creates between them, which relies upon his use of materials and the way he puts his ideas into practice. Fischer’s approach is neither hierarchic nor judgmental.

For further information, please contact Anna Caruso at Galerie Eva Presenhuber.

Opening hours:	Tuesday – Friday	12 noon – 6 pm
	Saturday	11 am – 5 pm

Current exhibition at the gallery:
Dieter Roth, “Drawings”, until September 22, 2007

Upcoming exhibition at the gallery:
Tim Rollins and K.O.S., “25 Years”, opening on October 19, 2007

Further (group) exhibitions featuring Urs Fischer in 2007:

- 52th Venice Biennale, church of San Stae (with Ugo Rondinone), until November 21, 2007
- “Sequence 1” (painting and sculpture from the François Pinault Collection), Palazzo Grassi, Venice, until November 11, 2007
- “Traum und Trauma (Dream and Trauma)” (works from the Dakis Joannou Collection, Athens), Kunsthalle and MUMOK, Vienna, until October 28, 2007
- “Fractured Figure” (works from the Dakis Joannou Collection), Deste Foundation Centre for Contemporary Art, N. Ionia, Athens, September 5, 2007 to March 23, 2008
- Lyon Biennale, September 19, 2007 to January 6, 2008
- “Hamsterwheel”, Le Printemps de Septembre, Toulouse, September 21 to October 14, 2007
- “The Third Mind” (curated by Ugo Rondinone), Palais de Tokyo, Paris, September 27 to December 30, 2007
- “Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century”, The New Museum, New York, starting December 1, 2007