

GALERIE MARIAN GOODMAN

Pure Fiction

Curated by Julie Boukobza

June 10 – July 22, 2016

Opening: Friday June 10th, 6pm-8pm

“Born, raised, educated in an exclusively ‘verbal’ milieu and culture, I paint to *un-train* myself.” Henri Michaux

Galerie Marian Goodman is delighted to present *Pure Fiction*, an exhibition featuring selected works by Ed Atkins, Marcel Broodthaers, Michael Dean, Robert Filliou, Pierre Klossowski, Henri Michaux, Win McCarthy, Giuseppe Penone, Bunny Rogers, Lili Reynaud-Dewar and Josef Strau. These artists, born between 1899 and 1990, express themselves through both visual and written means. If one doesn’t always presuppose the other, both practices do sometimes overlap.

“There are pure fictions that do not necessarily derive from words or stories, but strike with the power of their visual language instead: one thinks of Michael Dean’s sculptures, Lili Reynaud-Dewar’s performances, Ed Atkins’s videos. In one essay, Josef Strau has been described as “an artist who writes and a writer who makes art.” Within Strau’s oeuvre, text is often filtered through his installations, or appears as a complement to *Icons*, canvases with metallic drawings on view here. One also bears in mind *Book and Muscle*, a work by Michael Dean, which intertwines the body of the sculpture with the body of the text. *A body as public as a book can be*, the subtitle of *My Epidemic* (2015) by Lili Reynaud-Dewar, would in fact perfectly describe the artist’s own corpus. Her long curtains, stained with vermillion ink, evoke a manuscript uncoiling. Bunny Rogers exhibits a doll tied to a stump of a ceramic tree on which rests one limited edition of her *Cunny Poems*. Warning: no work in this exhibition is required reading. The brain has two very distinct hemispheres; the artists presented here each lead a double life. Henri Michaux “changes marshalling yards” when he switches from poetry to painting. For Marcel Broodthaers and Pierre Klossowski, words seem to come before images—but who can say? The murals by Ed Atkins maintain the deaf violence of his videos and the acuity of his poems, while making this indictment: “Life is utterly miserable because of you personally.” *The, A Novel, Robert Filliou* (ca 1976) is a *mise en abîme* of what loving literature means, according to the artist. In addition to the exhibited works, books written by all the artists are available for consultation. Collections of poems by Giuseppe Penone are positioned close to *Cocci* (1979), his works in terra cotta and plaster. It’s pure fiction for the imagination, such as when one gazes upon “*always these few raindrops and / never the storm. / always a partial view*” (*Winnie’s View 28 - 30*) (2015), a piece by Win McCarthy which represents the artist’s self-portrait.” Julie Boukobza

Ed Atkins (born in Oxford in 1982) has recently exhibited his work at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (2015), the Palais de Tokyo in Paris (2014) and at the Serpentine Gallery in London (2014). His work was included in the group exhibition *Co-Workers* at the Musée d’Art moderne de la Ville de Paris (2015).

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Marcel Broodthaers (Brussels, 1924 - Cologne, 1976). The MoMA in New York recently dedicated a major retrospective to his work, and the Monnaie de Paris presented the exhibition *Musée d'Art Moderne - Département des Aigles* in 2015.

Michael Dean (born in Newcastle in 1977) was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2016. A solo exhibition of his work was recently shown at the South London Gallery. The Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas will dedicate an exhibition to his work, entitled *Sightings*, from October 2016 through February 2017.

Robert Filliou (Sauve, 1926 - Les Eyzies-de-Tayac, 1987). The M HKA in Antwerp will organize a retrospective exhibition of Filliou's in October 2016. The Henry Moore Institute in Leeds presented *Robert Filliou: The Institute of Endless Possibilities* in 2013.

Pierre Klossowski (Paris, 1905 - Paris, 2001). Recent retrospective exhibitions of the artist's work were shown at the Whitechapel Gallery in London (2006), the Ludwig Museum in Cologne and the Centre Pompidou in Paris (2007).

Henri Michaux (Namur, 1899 - Paris, 1984). In 1999, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France celebrated its centenary with an exhibition showcasing Michaux's dually literary and artistic approach. Currently, an exhibition on this same theme is held at the Bibliotheca Wittrockiana in Brussels.

Win McCarthy (born in Brooklyn in 1986) is amongst the group of artists participating in the exhibition *Mirror Cells* at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. He has also participated in the group exhibition *Puddle, pothole, portal* at the SculptureCenter in New York (2014-2015).

Giuseppe Penone (born in Garessio in 1947) is currently exhibiting new works at MART, Rovereto in Italy. New sculptures will be presented in Rijksmuseum gardens in Amsterdam from June to October 2016. Two exhibitions are also planned at the Marian Goodman galleries in Paris and London for early September 2016.

Bunny Rogers (born in Houston in 1990) presents current work at the Foundation De 11 Lijnen in Belgium through July 16th. In France, she recently participated in the group exhibition *Co-Workers* at the Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris (2015).

Lili Reynaud-Dewar (born in La Rochelle in 1975) was bestowed with the 15th Prix Fondation d'entreprise Ricard. Following exhibitions at the New Museum in New York (2014) and the Centre National d'art contemporain Le Magasin in Grenoble (2015), she will have a solo show at the Kunstverein Hamburg this year.

Josef Strau (born in Vienna in 1957) recently exhibited work at The Secession in Vienna (2015); he has previously exhibited at the Renaissance Society in Chicago (2014) and at Malmö Konsthall (2009).

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Fiction

I got your letter. Great to know you like my work. No, I don't have a fan club. Maybe I should get one. "The greats" all have fan clubs, right? With a president and a secretary and a treasurer. Trouble is, I would probably manipulate the president, sleep with the secretary, and intimidate the treasurer into embezzling the club coffers.

As for advice, you did not specify specific issues about which I might advise. To be honest, I meant to throw your letter in the trash and send you a form reply, saying something like "Keep your goals in mind," or "Practice makes a perfect practitioner." (Lawyers and politicians and gurus overuse alliteration to emphasize and persuade, as do I.)

But after I looked at your letter on the edge my desk for two days, I felt compelled to have a conversation with you: my fan. Whom I picture sitting on a curb by the side of the road and feeling pulled. Sure, this could be from the cars that drive by, suctioning you from your precarious position on the curb with the velocity of their speed; enticing you to drift off the sidewalk with their momentum.

Though it feels like something else, right? A pull more from the inside of your skin, rather than from the outside.

Sure, you've sat on your fair share of curbs. A lot of books and magazines have been read, movies watched, TV series consumed, parties attended, and outfits coordinated, attempting to move beyond this curb.

To this end, you've twisted and reportioned yourself into various abstractions, not circumscribing extreme experiences, but having them. Losing yourself in the everything-and-nothing. Following people you had crushes on into this mud. Pulling them into it too. Going about life as if you are the central character anywhere but on that primary, grey, cement curb.

What you have really wanted is for someone to drop an anvil called Very Exciting on your head as you walk down the street, precipitating orgiastic dances on top of your five-layer birthday cake.

And then, anticlimactically, realizing that despite all efforts to drain, to be a total and superbly entertaining abstraction, that in fact you are figurative.

Because an object can be an object. Not blown apart or perfect in that explosion. Not a fragment, but a composite. An entire thing. There might even be a beginning, a middle, and an end.

And it's not even satire, but really just the thing it says it is. A spade's a spade.

Such as the last part of my reply where I ask what you are wearing and if there's a Mrs. or a Mr. Fan. Or maybe I don't care about that either. Because my point isn't whether or not I invented or reconfigured you, rather, that you are that exciting anvil dropping on my head. And I am the car pulling you beneath my wheels.

Glad we're in touch. Hope to see you for my next signing at Barnes & Noble!

Mary Rinebold Copeland
Writer and art critic