



REGIONE PIEMONTE BANCA CRT FIAT GRUPPO GFT
CASTELLO DI RIVOLI

PRESS RELEASE

EXHIBITION

POST HUMAN

CURATOR

Jeffrey Deitch

PRESS OFFICE

Massimo Melotti

OPENING

THURSDAY OCTOBER 1st, 1992, 7 pm

For the press
Opening at 11 am
Visit with the curator at 5 pm

EXHIBITION DATES

October 2nd - November 22th, 1992

MUSEUM HOURS

10 am - 7 pm
Closed on Mondays

Castello di Rivoli
Museo d'Arte Contemporanea
Piazza del Castello
10098 Rivoli TO

REGIONE PIEMONTE BANCA CRT FIAT GRUPPO GFT
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THE EXHIBITION AND THE ARTISTS

From October 2nd 1992, the Castello di Rivoli will show the exhibition "Post Human", previously at the F.A.E., Musée d'Art Contemporain in Losanne and curated by the American critic Jeffrey Deitch.

The exhibition focuses on the contemporary interest artists show today for the human body and the various expressions of bodily functions. In particular this show investigates the significance of the most recent methods of manipulation and "improvement" of the body, made possible by advanced technology.

According to Jeffrey Deitch's interpretation, artists respond to this possible future scenario and to symptoms.

In their photographs Clegg & Guttmann, take their inspiration from Northern European portrait painting of the Seventeenth-Century, to stress the power of the subject within the social group, whereas, in contrast, Thomas Ruff's portraits and Stephan Balkenhol's wooden sculptures emphasise the individual's massification. Fishli/Weiss's photographs and sculptures offer us that same world, view through the images of airports and tourist localities, falsely exotic, an edulcorated world one which finds an echo in white sculptures where man has lost his individuality.

The softening of the image is taken up again, in more accentuated tones, by Yasumasa Morimura, who, in quoting Bruegel, Velazquez or Manet, substitutes the characters of their world with those of a world which is both contemporary and grotesque.

Cindy Sherman investigates how the mass media exploit women's image by producing manikins in which the feminine aspects are accentuated, and where signs of sadistic mutilation are made visible.

Janine Antoni, refers to the myth of beauty and keeping slim, which today are assuming increasingly neurotic aspects. The ar-

tist bites and chews cubes of bacon fat or chocolate, which she then uses to make lipsticks and cake-boxes.

Sylvie Fleury, too, operates in the world of "appearance", where fashion dictates the law: her installations are formed of women's shoe boxes, left lying open on carpets, beside sofas, around which lay precious feminine shoes to underline the prevailing system of desire-possession-consumption, and also of fetishism.

The gratification which substitutes possession for being is also evoked by John M Armleder, who exhibits Brooks Brother's suits hanging on coat-hangers, or by Suzan Etkin, with her dry-cleaning machine with its continuous circular motion. The narcissistic aspect, inherent in the tinsel decorating the body, is equally inherent in the body itself: Matthew Barney subjects himself to apparently absurd muscular resistance tests, which are actually a reference to sporting performances, often tinged with overtones of sado-masochism.

In the world of consumption, of possession, sexuality finds an artificial safety valve in fetishism, in the substitution which can satisfy it. This makes social control of sexuality possible. Felix Gonzales-Torres makes this sexual consumerism into a true performance with his platform for dancer-strippers; as does Ashley Bickerton, through the use of announcements of sexual performance published in specialized journals, and lastly, with Jeff Koons, who has joined art, performance and life, creating a phantasmagoria of erotic signs, frozen in the marriage of the porno star Ilona Staller. Again in the field of sexuality, but with the aim of provoking, mixing scatological themes with horror themes: Kiki Smith with her sculpture of a woman on her hands and knee who leaves behind her an interrupted trail of excrements, Pia Stadtbaumer with her anthropomorphic sculptures; Paul McCarthy, with "Giardino", an installation which portrays a future post-human world, in which the human form, while conserving its appearance, is transmuted into a robot which has the natural environment surrounding it as the object and outlet for its sexual obsession.

But the loss of psycho-physical reference points, as well as estranging desire, which now desperately looks for new fetishes, is also expressed as a split, a separation, a loss of psychic identity which in some subjects is branded by the consumer habit. Thus Robert Gober exhibits human limbs sticking out of the walls, George Lappas exhibits disjointed manikins, Annette Lemieux feet without a body which stray over the floor.

And Damien Hirst shows windows full of medicines, to stress that even the concept of The Healthy Man cannot escape from the prevarication of the market rationale.

The loss of identity determines the search for a possible recombination, though with a strong overtone of play. Christian Marclay assembles and superimposes record covers, creating a new species of mutant, based on the "glamour" of glossy paper. But if the individual elements used are captivating, the same cannot be

said of the whole, which is impregnated with deforming characters.

Wim Delvoe and **Meyer Vaisman** attempt to reconnect that which has no relation: the former, the football goal whose net has been replaced by the stained glass window of a church picturing a saint; the latter, turkeys covered in straw or veils, or wearing rabbit fur.

For some of the artists in the exhibition, reference to the stereotypes of the childhood world constitutes the keystone to interpret the adult's sense of discomfort towards society. Their seeking refuge in a sort of reinvented childish or adolescent world takes on ironic, grotesque or alienating connotations.

Taro Chiezo creates arrangements of mobile toy cars, dressed in camp doll's clothes. **Martin Honert** presents two statues of altar boys looking like Christmas card figures:

Daniel Oates reinvents characters who could have come out of the world of comics. **Mike Kelley** exhibits rag animals crammed together in bunches and hanging by threads from the ceiling.

Karen Kilimnik takes consumer goods and stereotypes typical of the adolescent culture, as do **Pruitt & Early**, who portrays themselves hanged in front of a collection of tin cans with characteristic messages of the teenage culture.

Martin Kippenberger uses classic materials like bronze and iron for his sculptures portraying himself, he dresses them with real clothes and places them in attitudes of "disgrace" like a naughty child in a corner. **Charles Ray** operates on dimensions to create an alienation of perception, with hyper-realistic and over-sized statues of women, symbols of the dominating maternal figure. **Cady Noland**, lastly, re-protrays the adult world through the elaboration of stereotyped images of the printed page, images of violence like that of heiress-terrorist **Patricia Hearst**, or of **Lee Harvey Oswald**, who assassinated **Kennedy**.

The book-catalogue which accompanies the exhibition contains a critical text by the organizer, and includes reproductions of the artistic works face to face with images of the new corporeality, which already invades the mass-media.

The **Castello di Rivoli** is the second stop of this itinerant exhibition, which will then go to the **Deste Foundation** for contemporary Art in Athens, and to the **Deichtorhallen** in Hamburg.