

ROBERT MILLER GALLERY

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PANOPTICUM

Curated by Kevin Moore

March 1 – April 12, 2014

Opening: Saturday, March 1, 6-8pm

New York, NY – February 21, 2014. Robert Miller Gallery is pleased to present **PANOPTICUM**, a group exhibition curated by Kevin Moore. The gallery's first collaboration with the Herbert List Estate in over a decade, **PANOPTICUM** is also the launch of a series of special projects re-contextualizing vintage photography with contemporary works in various media. The exhibition includes a new large-scale dystopian installation by Jonah Freeman and Justin Lowe commissioned by Robert Miller Gallery, as well as works by Robert Beck, Michaël Borremans, Mark Dion, Robert Heinecken, Tricia Lawless Murray, Cindy Sherman, and Taryn Simon.

Moore says of the exhibition:

"PANOPTICUM—'with all visible'—borrows its title from a late nineteenth-century Viennese chamber of horrors, featuring wax figures depicting crime scenes, medical oddities, and other luridly voyeuristic entertainments. German photographer Herbert List (1903-1975) photographed this threadbare spectacle in 1944, adding a layer of Surrealist dis-ease to the mix. List's photographs, a large selection of which are included in the current exhibition, revealed the discrepancies between what might seem to be an edifying scientific exposition and a cabinet of modern social pathologies.

The thrilling effects of such encounters continues today in contemporary society's fascination with crime dramas, forensic science, plastic surgery, and at the intersections between modern science, human biology, and the culture's darkest fantasies. As a preponderance of supernatural phenomena in film and television, plus the continuous feed of lurid Yahoo headlines show, there is apparently no bottom to the stomach of this culture gorging on its own fears and faits divers."

Kevin Moore is an independent curator and writer based in New York. He is the author of *Starburst: Color Photography in America 1970-1980* (Cincinnati Art Museum/Hatje Cantz, 2010) and *Jacques Henri Lartigue: The Invention of an Artist* (Princeton University Press, 2004), and a contributing author to *Robert Heinecken* (Ridinghouse, 2012) and *Words Without Pictures* (LACMA/Aperture, 2009). His recent exhibitions include *Alchemical* (Steven Kasher Gallery, New York, 2013) and *Eve Plays Duchamp* (Brancolini Grimaldi, London, 2013).

Herbert List (b. 1903-1975, Hamburg, Germany) integrated his classical education and his own lyrical sensibility with the influences of Surrealism and New Objectivity. Influenced by the paintings of Giorgio de Chirico, List began his own project "Fotografia Metafisica" in 1936 soon after he fled Germany. His images of young men and classical antiquity in Greece and Italy from this period have become iconic. At the urging of Robert Capa, he became a contributor to the photography cooperative Magnum through the 1950s. List's works have been included in a number of important recent group exhibitions; *The Encyclopedic Palace*, 55th Venice Biennale (2013) and the 8th Gwangju Biennale, *10,000 Lives* (2010) both organized by Massimiliano Gioni, as well as Tate Liverpool's *The Uncanny* (2004) curated by Mike Kelley.

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Robert Beck (later changed to Robert Buck; b. 1959, Baltimore, MD) creates encounters between objects and the viewer, and alludes to intensely personal narratives that are intertwined with cultural icons and myths. His work has been shown at institutions, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art, Indianapolis; PS1, New York; and others.

Michaël Borremans (b. 1963, Geraardsbergen, Belgium) creates drawings, paintings, and films depicting evocative somber characters, intimate close-up views, and unsettling still lifes. His work has been solo exhibited at numerous prominent institutions, including Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart; Kunstneres Hus in Oslo, commissioned work on view at the Royal Palace in Brussels; kestnergesellschaft, Hanover; de Appel Arts Centre, Amsterdam; Kunsthalle Bremerhaven, Germany; Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (S.M.A.K.), Ghent; and the Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel.

Mark Dion (b. 1961, New Bedford, MA) examines the ways in which dominant ideologies and public institutions form our understanding of history, knowledge, and the natural world by appropriating and methodically collecting, ordering, and exhibiting objects. Dion has received numerous awards, including the ninth annual Larry Aldrich Foundation Award, and has had major exhibitions at the Miami Art Museum; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut; and Tate Gallery, London. Dion lives and works in Pennsylvania.

Since 2007, **Jonah Freeman** (b. 1975, Santa Fe, NM) and **Justin Lowe** (b. 1976, Dayton, OH) have been collaboratively drawing on a series of historical and fictional narratives to create large-scale, maze-like architectural installations. Their explorations of architecture as immersive sculpture are realized by reimagining dystopian visions, psychotic episodes, and the workings of drug-related subcultures. Their joint practice has led to solo exhibitions at Art Basel: Basel and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, as well as numerous group exhibitions worldwide.

Robert Heinecken (b. 1931-2006, Denver, CO) examined provocative subjects for his photographic works – sexual politics, the media marketplace, the Vietnam War, pornography – that led to avid fans and staunch critics. Rarely using a camera to make his pictures, it is difficult to limit his practice to “photography” in the strict sense of the word – photography was his means to an artistic end. Heinecken is the subject of *Object Matter* an upcoming retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art (March 15 – September 7, 2014).

Tricia Lawless Murray is a Los Angeles-based artist working in photography, video, collage, sculpture and installation. Her work oftentimes addresses themes such as desire, memory, erotic objectification, and the subjectivity of the artist. Lawless Murray’s work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, including Brancolini Grimaldi, London; Project Space Kreuzberg, Berlin; and Jancar Gallery, Los Angeles.

In **Cindy Sherman’s** (b. 1954, Glen Ridge, NJ) *Fairy Tales and Disasters* series from the mid- to late 1980s, the artist began removing herself from the picture and moving toward more fantastic and lurid imagery. The ever-increasing market for her photographs also prompted her to attempt to create work that was “unsalable” due to its visceral depictions of vomit, body parts, and grotesque fairy tales. Sherman’s work has appeared in major exhibitions at Sprüth Magers, Berlin; Jeu de Paume, Paris; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; among others. She has participated in many international events, including SITE Santa Fe; the Venice Biennale; and five Whitney Biennial exhibitions.

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In her *An American Index of the Hidden and Unfamiliar* series, **Taryn Simon** (b. 1975, New York, NY) reveals objects, sites, and spaces that are integral to America's foundation, mythology, or daily functioning but remain inaccessible or unknown to a public audience. Simon's photographs and writing have been the subject of monographic exhibitions at institutions including Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt; Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; and P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York.

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