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Wed-Sat 11am-6pm or by appointment

The Id, the Ego and the Superego

Sam Jackson, Hugh Mendes & Gavin Nolan

Curated by Zavier Ellis & Marcela Munteanu

Private View
Friday May 4th

Exhibition Dates
Saturday May 5th – Saturday June 2nd 2012

Address
Galerie BRAUBACHfive, 5 Braubachstr, D-60311 Frankfurt, Germany

Gallery Hours
Tuesday–Saturday 11am–6pm

In his papers *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and *The Ego and the Id*, Sigmund Freud outlined his theories on the structure of the human psyche, where personality exists in a state of constant conflict between three main components: the id, the ego and the superego. The three artists in this exhibition were brought together to illustrate a psychoanalytical reading of contemporary painting in response to Freud's notions. Jackson, Mendes and Nolan choose to focus on the human form as subject matter, but in doing so treat the subject as a means to investigate the archaeology of the self, and often in order to reveal innermost psychological concerns.

Jackson's predominantly small scale paintings and Polaroids are analogous to a type of free association where images and memories combine to reveal manifest and latent content, dominated by instinctive violence, melancholia and impulsive sexuality. At once obsessive, fetishist and beautiful, these works reveal both destructive and life affirming drives whilst becoming sublimating mechanisms for both artist and audience. They are instinctive forays into the transgressive that are defined by an unrelenting representation of instantaneous and base gratification. Jackson's subjects derive from the artist's own source material as well as found images and embody everything that is innate and intuitive in an artist's practice.

Mendes' approach represents an entirely organised and rigorous methodology. His obsessive enquiry into newspaper obituaries is a structured appraisal of the greatest unknown, and should be seen in the context of the artist having suffered bereavement at an early age. By intellectualising and transferring Mendes presents as abstract a wholly emotive subject, and notably continues to repeat renderings of different obituaries at a constant scale and in a regularised compositional scheme. Trauma is bound by a compulsion to repeat in order to overcome repressed anxiety caused by that trauma, and this repetition can be transferred into many forms, one of those being painting. In contrast to the id's desire for pleasure and its domination by the libido, we find here a death instinct, or as Freud stated *an urge...to restore an earlier state of things*.

In contrast to the id, although no less intuitive, stands the superego. A parental conscience, the superego assumes the role of the father figure as laid out in the Oedipus Complex. Once identification with the father figure becomes apparent then an internalised system of ethics develops, again in contrast to the pleasure seeking, or at least pain avoiding, amorality of the id. The moralising tendencies of the superego might be likened to structures prevalent in civilisation. For example, monotheistic religion, governed by a God (the omnipotent and ultimate father figure) provides a system of codes that serve to deny the amoral urges of unconscious instinct. Likewise, Government dictates rules and regulations to its populace. And culture provides guidelines that might or might not be consistent with the intentions of the above. Gavin Nolan's work interlaces tropes laid out by the histories of religion, art and capitalist society, as the artist maps their symbols onto his painted subjects. By employing linguistic codes Nolan embraces and critiques that which is prescribed by parent culture. Vortices of numerous elements are laid onto his subjects, those commonly being the artist himself, people around him, or composite portraits derived from the art historical or popular culture. As such Nolan constructs new visages by means of reorganisation and invention, playing God himself.

Of course the process of making paintings can be viewed as sublimative in itself. A culturally and socially acceptable way of communicating is used to express the unacceptable and the otherwise internalised. Together Jackson, Mendes and Nolan wrestle with difficult psychological drives to explicate and manifest them rendered in paint.

Zavier Ellis, 2012

Please contact gallery for images and further information

Editor's notes:

Sam Jackson

Born: 1977

Education: MA in Fine Art, Royal Academy Schools, 2004 – 2007; BA (Hons) in Fine Art (First Class), Middlesex University, 2000 - 2003

Selected Exhibitions: 2011: The Saatchi Gallery & Channel 4's New Sensations and The Future Can Wait (curated by Zavier Ellis, Simon Rumley & Rebecca Wilson), B1, Victoria House, London; Everyday (curated by Tony Benn), Ruskin Gallery, Cambridge; 2010: Pokerface, Koraalberg Contemporary Art Gallery, Antwerp; Ray Lowry London Calling, Idea Generation, London (touring to New York & Tokyo); New British Painting (curated by Zavier Ellis & Pilvi Kalhama), Gallery Kalhama & Piippo, Helsinki; 2009: Vas Deferens, CHARLIE SMITH london (Solo); British Art Now (curated by Edward Lucie-Smith), Werkstatt Galerie, Berlin; The Future Can Wait (curated by Zavier Ellis & Simon Rumley), Old Truman Brewery, London; 2008: The Cabinet Braubach Five, Frankfurt (Solo); A Stain upon the Silence (curated by Chris Shilling, Chris Page & Gaboy Gaynor), St. Martins College of Art, London; Anticipation (curated by Kay Saatchi & Catriona Warren), Selfridges, London; UK Best Graduates, White Box Gallery, New York; The Past is History (curated by Zavier Ellis & Simon Rumley), Changing Role Gallery, Naples & Rome; New London School (curated by Zavier Ellis & Simon Rumley), Mark Moore Gallery, LA ; The R.A.5, Lennon Weinberg, New York

Selected Awards & Residencies: 2007: Chelsea Arts Club Travel Award; 2005: Sturdley Award; 2004: British Institute Award; 2003-2004: Florence Trust Studio Award

Collections: Carlos Fragoso, New York; Glen Luchford, New York; David Roberts, London; Sir Norman Rosenthal, London; Kay Saatchi, London; private collections in Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom & United States

Hugh Mendes

Born: 1955

Education: 2000- 2001: MA Fine Art, City and Guilds of London Art School; 1975-1978: BA (Hons) Fine Art, Chelsea School of Art, London

Selected Exhibitions: 2012: Obituaries (One Person), CHARLIE SMITH london, London ; 2011: 9/10/11 (One Person), KENNY SCHACHTER / ROVE, London; The Saatchi Gallery & Channel 4's New Sensations and The Future Can Wait, Victoria House, London; Polemically Small (curated by Edward Lucie-Smith), Klaipeda Culture Communication Centre, Klaipeda; The Future Can Wait presents: Polemically Small, Torrance Art Museum, Torrance; 2010: Press Art, Museum der Moderne, Salzburg; 2008: New London School (curated by Zavier Ellis & Simon Rumley), Mark Moore Gallery, Los Angeles; 2006: New London Kicks , Wooster Projects, New York; 2005: Fuckin' Brilliant, Tokyo Wonder Site, Tokyo; Art News, Raid Projects, Los Angeles; 2004: Forest, Rockwell Gallery, London; 2003: Chockafukingblocked, Jeffery Charles Gallery, London; 2002: Yesteryearnowadays, Hales Gallery, London

Collections: Jerry Hall, London; Peter Nobel, Zurich; Kenny Schachter, London; Steve Shane, New York; Bill Wyman, London; Wooster Projects, New York; private collections in China, Germany, United Kingdom & United States

Gavin Nolan

Born: 1977

Education: 1999 – 2002: MA in Fine Art, Royal Academy Schools; 1996 – 1999: BA (Hons) in Fine Art, Loughborough University School of Art

Selected Exhibitions: 2011: The Saatchi Gallery & Channel 4's New Sensations and The Future Can Wait, Victoria House, London; Polemically Small (curated by Edward Lucie-Smith), Klaipeda Culture Communication Centre, Klaipeda; The Future Can Wait presents: Polemically Small, Torrance Art Museum, Torrance; 2010: The Reflected Gaze, Torrance Art Museum, Torrance; 2009: The Future Can Wait (curated by Zavier Ellis & Simon Rumley), Old Truman Brewery, London; Hexen Reflex (one person), Mark Moore Gallery, Los Angeles; 2008: The Past is History (curated by Zavier Ellis & Simon Rumley), Changing Role Gallery, Naples & Rome; New London School (curated by Zavier Ellis & Simon Rumley), Mark Moore Gallery, Los Angeles; 2006: Icons, Chungking Projects, Los Angeles; Unnatural Selection (one person), Sartorial Contemporary Art, London; 2005: Maji Jabii! Fucking Brilliant!!, Tokyo Wondersite, Tokyo; New London Kicks, Wooster Projects, New York; The Sun Also Rises, Rockwell, London; 2004: Born, Cry, Eat, Shit, Fuck, Die, Rockwell, London

Collections: Marc Coucke, Ghent; Jean Pigozzi, Geneva; David Roberts, London; Thomas Rusche, Münster; Dr Rainer Schiweck, Munich; Howard Tullman, Chicago; private collections in Germany, Italy, United Kingdom & United States

Zavier Ellis

Zavier Ellis is the Director of the Hoxton gallery CHARLIE SMITH london. He is also co-founder of the museum scale show for emerging artists *The Future Can Wait*, which was most recently arranged in partnership with The Saatchi Gallery. Ellis has curated exhibitions internationally including in Helsinki, Los Angeles, Naples, Rome, Berlin, Klaipeda and London. Known as an acute talent spotter he has identified and exhibited a number of important young artists from art college including David Blandy, Oliver Clegg, Tessa Farmer, Sam Jackson, Monica Ursina Jäger, Annie Kevans, Nika Neelova and Douglas White. Zavier is also a practicing artist and has most recently exhibited at Paul Stolper Gallery in London and Museum der Moderne in Salzburg. Also an artist with an MA in Fine Art, Ellis has work in several renowned international collections and has exhibited at Paul Stolper Gallery in London with Damien Hirst, Peter Blake and Simon Periton; and at the Museum der Moderne, Salzburg with Francis Bacon, Alberto Giacometti, Thomas Hirschhorn, Jannis Kounellis, Robert Rauschenberg, Ed Ruscha, Kurt Schwitters, Antoni Tapies and others.
