

PRESS RELEASE

OLD SCHOOL

HAUSER & WIRTH COLNAGHI

15 OLD BOND STREET

LONDON W1S 4AX

11TH MAY – 9TH JUNE, 2007

OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY 10TH MAY

LOUIS-LÉOPOLD BOILLY, MICHAËL BORREMANS, PAUL BRIL, GLENN BROWN, JAN BRUEGHEL THE ELDER, JAN BRUEGHEL THE YOUNGER, STEVEN CLAYDON, LUCAS CRANACH THE ELDER, JOHN CURRIN, BERLINDE DE BRUYCKERE, CARLO DOLCI, BATTISTA DOSSI, HILARY HARKNESS, JULIE HEFFERNAN, KAREN KILIMNIK, MASTER OF FEMALE HALF-LENGTHS, CHRISTOPHER ORR, DJORDJE OZBOLT, ELIZABETH PEYTON, MICHAEL RAEDECKER, WILHELM SASNAL, ANJ SMITH, JACOB VAN SWANENBURGH, LUC TUYMANS, JEFF WALL, RICHARD WATHEN, JAKUB JULIAN ZIOLKOWSKI.

OLD SCHOOL CELEBRATES A RE-ENGAGEMENT WITH OLD MASTER MODES OF REPRESENTATION, WHICH MIGHT BE SAID TO BE A RECENT PHENOMENON IN CONTEMPORARY ART. BEYOND IRONIC APPROPRIATION, A NEW SCHOOL OF ARTISTS LOOK TO THE PAST AND REVEL IN THE SOPHISTICATED PLEASURES OF ANACHRONISM, SWERVING BETWEEN PERIOD STYLES AND DETAILS WITH GAY ABANDON.

AFFINITIES CONTINUALLY EMPHASISE DIFFERENCES IN A DIALOGUE BETWEEN OLD AND NEW. BY ADOPTING THE ICONOGRAPHIES, GRAPHIC RHYTHMS AND TECHNIQUES OF LUCAS CRANACH, JOHN CURRIN'S PAINTINGS FROM THE MID TO LATE NINETIES GRAFT A HISTORICAL COMPLEXITY AND PAINTERLY PANACHE TO THE PROVOCATIVELY UNNATURAL FEMALE BODIES THAT FEATURE IN HIS PAINTINGS. ARTISTS SUCH AS CURRIN, WALL AND SMITH CONSCIOUSLY MAKE USE OF CLASSIC COMPOSITIONS OF GENRE, HISTORY AND LANDSCAPE PAINTING SO THAT THEIR IMAGES RECALL AND SUMMON THE SPIRITS OF COUNTLESS PAST ARTWORKS WHILST THEY MINE THE GAP BETWEEN CURRENT SENSIBILITIES AND THOSE OF PREVIOUS TIMES. THIS OBSERVANCE OF DIFFERENT MOMENTS OF TIME WITHIN A SINGLE IMAGE IS EXPLORED TO THE HILT IN HILARY HARKNESS' PAINTINGS, WHICH CONFLATE EPISODES FROM HISTORY WITH A VERY CONTEMPORARY KINKINESS, AND IN THE WORKS OF RICHARD WATHEN WHOSE PORTRAITS ARE CHILLING DISTILLATIONS OF ALL OF A PERSON'S AGES INTO ONE.

WHILST TECHNICAL DEXTERITY IS A CHARACTERISTIC OF MANY OF THE WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION, THE ATTITUDES DISPLAYED BY THESE WORKS TOWARDS THE ART OF THE PAST VARY TREMENDOUSLY. IF CURRIN'S HOMAGE TO OLD MASTER WORK IS SPIKED WITH AMBIVALENCE, THEN IN THE PAINTINGS OF DJORDJE OZBOLT AND ANJ SMITH SUPERFICIAL RESEMBLANCES TO OLD AND ICONIC WORKS GIVE WAY TO STYLISTIC FRENZIES. BERLINDE DE BRUYCKERE'S WORKS, IN EXTREME CONTRAST, RETURN TO

TIMELESS MATERIALS TO TREAT AGE-OLD SUBJECT MATTERS WITH WARMTH AND SINCERITY.

IN OLD MASTER AND NEW MASTER WORKS ALIKE, THEATRICALITY AND STORYTELLING ARE INDULGED TO THE FULL. ALLEGORIES CAN BE READ AND OPINIONS PRONOUNCED THROUGH CHANCE DETAILS AND EXAGGERATED AND IDEALIZED FORMS. BATHOS, HUMOUR AND ROLE-PLAYING ABOUND IN WORKS SUCH AS JAKUB JULIAN ZIOLKOWSKI'S *THE GREAT BATTLE UNDER THE TABLE* AND JULIE HEFFERNAN'S *SELF PORTRAIT AS A TENDER MERCENARY*, WHILST IT IS THE DOWDILY-DRESSED PEOPLE THAT INHABIT ORR'S BRUEGHEL-LIKE LANDSCAPES THAT GIVE HIS PAINTINGS THEIR STRANGENESS. LIKE ORR, BORREMANS, PEYTON, KILIMNIK, AND RAEDECKER ALL WEAVE GRIM AND FABULOUS FAIRY-TALES OUT OF THE CONJOINING OF MODERN-DAY REALITIES AND OLD-FASHIONED CHARM.

OLD SCHOOL HAS BEEN CURATED IN CO-OPERATION WITH COLNAGHI AND ZWIRNER & WIRTH, NEW YORK.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND ARTWORK MATERIAL, PLEASE CONTACT
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GALLERY HOURS TUESDAY TO SATURDAY 10AM – 6PM