

PRESS RELEASE



Paul McCarthy, *Tripod*, 2006 (detail), Fiberglass, resin, pigment, steel, 266.7 x 182.88 x 203.2 cm. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth

THORN IN THE FLESH

Curated by Dieter Buchhart

11 September 2014 - May 2015 | Opening Thursday, September 11, 7-9.30pm

Jean-Michel Basquiat | Max Beckmann | Louise Bourgeois | Paul McCarthy | George Condo | Jim Dine | Jean Dubuffet | Donald Judd | Kazuo Shiraga | Willem de Kooning | Claes Oldenburg | A.R. Penck | Michelangelo Pistoletto | Neo Rauch

The George Economou Collection is pleased to announce the group exhibition *Thorn in the Flesh* curated by Dieter Buchhart. The opening will take place on Thursday, September 11, 2014 in the Economou Collection Space in Athens, Greece.

Modernism manifests itself as a constant antagonism between abstraction and figuration. The exhibition *Thorn in the Flesh* is dedicated to exploring these antagonisms and their impact on art from after the Second World War to now. In so doing, postmodern polymorphism finds striking overlaps among concrete, informel, abstract, and figuration, in contrast to a mere insistence on rigid concepts. The exhibition focuses on three sequential areas: *Disruption*, *Figure*, and *Flesh*.

Disruption refers to the tear in the fabric of modernism. While Jean-Michel Basquiat's *SLINGSHOT* depicts a David and Goliath struggle against racism, repression, and social injustice, McCarthy's *Tripod* deconstructs the human body using various dimensions for individual body parts, the intactness of which the artist attacks and destroys with abstract shapes. Equally, Rauch's painting *Reich* represents a mutual interaction of various forms and layers of reality. A television tower, a pole, and letters remain like thorns in the texture of a landscape seemingly committed to realism.

The second part of the show, *Figure*, is dedicated to exploring the proportions of the human body. Max Beckmann's life-sized half portraits and the two pointed shapes in Louise Bourgeois' *Knife Couple* reflect human proportions in the interaction of abstraction and figuration. Michelangelo Pistoletto goes a step further, in that the beholder who can see his mirrored reflection alongside the pair of doppelgangers becomes part of the work.

The third thematic focus *Flesh* is dedicated to the materiality of paint and bodies of paint. For example, Jean Dubuffet's art brut representation of the human body by way of the haptic experience of the surface reflects human flesh, just as Kazuo Shiraga, using his hands and feet, transfers his own corporeality to his paintings, evoking associations of the destruction of the body in a wild paint slaughter of blood and human flesh. In *Brown and Yellow Abstraction* George Condo negotiates the still utterly contemporary antagonism between abstraction and figuration that oscillates among the dimensions of the human body, our existence, and an apparently non-figurative abstraction.

The exhibition will run from September 11, 2014 through May 2015 at the George Economou Collection Space, 80 Kifissias Ave., 15125 Marousi, Athens, Greece. Our opening hours are Monday to Friday from 10 am to 6 pm. For further information or images, please contact Annie-Claire Geisinger at +30 210 8090595 or acgeisinger@economoucollection.com.

Notes to Editors

The George Economou Collection is a private collection located in Athens, Greece. Rooted in history, social awareness and aesthetics, the collecting activity began evolving in the 1990s with a focus on early twentieth-century European art and has expanded to include an important holding of postwar and contemporary art. With a desire to share the creativity of the artists represented in the collection, the George Economou Collection organizes two to three exhibitions per year in the space in Athens and collaborates regularly with international institutions and curators. Reflecting the interest for socio-cultural awareness and the historical dialogue, these projects aim to create new opportunities for the public in Greece and abroad to engage with art.

Dr. Dr. Dieter Buchhart (born in 1971 in Vienna) is an art historian and curator of many exhibitions in renowned international institutions and art spaces such as *Keith Haring: Politics of the Line* Musée d'Art Modern de la Ville de Paris in 2013, *Warhol – Basquiat – Clemente*, Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany in 2012, *Basquiat* Fondation Beyeler / Musée d'Art Modern de la Ville de Paris, *Edvard Munch – Beside the Scream* Pinacothèque de Paris / Kunsthall Rotterdam and *Edvard Munch and Denmark Munch* Museum, Oslo in 2010.

The George Economou Collection
80 Kifissias Avenue, 15125, Marousi, Athens, Greece
T +30 2108090595
info@economoucollection.com
thegeorgeeconomoucollection.com