

PRESS RELEASE



Charles Ray, *Future Fragment on a Solid Base*, 2011
Aluminum, 210 x 122 x 91 cm. Photography by Josh White.
© Charles Ray Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery

Charles Ray

19 June 2017 – April 2018

Charles Ray at the George Economou Collection brings together five important works spanning a period from the early 1970s to the present. The exhibition draws attention to Ray's dialogue with compositions based on readymades as well as his technologically radical sculptures, which can take several years to produce.

The leg of a child's action figure, scaled up and remade in aluminum before being placed upon a cuboid pedestal, is the subject in *Future Fragment on a Solid Base*, 2011. The limb confronts its viewer, an artifact that prompts one to ask what has happened to the rest of the figure. The leg seems to hold the DNA of the entire figure, much like certain genetic information is transferred from parent to child. This work, which opens the show, is probably its most challenging, and goes right to the heart of Ray's sculptural project.

The show includes two materially seductive works that previously existed only as photographic documentation. One pairs a steel plate with fluorescent tubes, the other combines wood, rope, and brick; together they set the stage for a career that could be characterized as transforming experiences into objects. The process of making causes a transformation and creates some new immaterial property.

A careful investigation into the biological process of hatching, *Handheld Bird*, 2006, is a meditation on life and lifelessness. This painted steel sculpture of an embryonic form captures the life, death, and gestation of a creature that has not yet taken its final form. The intricately compressed body, with its folded legs and tucked-in wings, is intensely tactile: the impulse is to take it into your hand, which would make the hand into an egg, while your arm and body become its pedestal or support.

School Play, 2014, convincingly captures the state of being in character, in a role. The form, posture, and physiognomy of the boy in *School Play* gives him an easy pose that enhances our perception of the work as a translation of subject into object. On closer inspection, however, a range of tooling marks become evident and, in conjunction with the costume and props, the experience gives way to a certain estrangement that complicates the understanding of it as a strictly representational form or sculptural surrogate.

Ray's intentionality, sculptural language, and working methods could be understood as stemming from an uneasiness with the world, an alertness to the transitory nature of existence, an intimate feel for mortality, or his career-defining ability to complicate the fundamental epistemes of artistic production in the postwar period. His self-sufficient works, completely adequate in themselves, are more than an outward form of expression; they are intuition, the inner experience itself.

The exhibition is curated by Gavin Delahunty, Hoffman Family Senior Curator of Contemporary Art at the Dallas Museum of Art with Skarlet Smatana, Director of the GEC in close collaboration with the artist. A publication with new essays by Delahunty and Mark Godfrey, Senior Curator at Tate Modern, will accompany the exhibition.

The exhibition will be on view from 19 June 2017 until April 2018 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 Caroline May at +30 210 8090566 or caroline@artesia.gr

Notes to Editor

Gavin Delahunty is the Hoffman Family Senior Curator of Contemporary Art, Dallas Museum of Art (DMA). In this position, Delahunty leads the Museum's Department of Contemporary Art and oversees its exhibitions, programming, publication, and acquisition programs. Recent exhibitions include *Carey Young: The New Architecture* (2017), *Rebecca Warren: The Main Feeling* (2016), *Jackson Pollock: Blind Spots* (2015), *Frank Bowling: Map Paintings* (2015), and *NS Harsha: Sprouts, reach in to reach out* (2015). In spring 2018 Delahunty will introduce at the DMA the most comprehensive exhibition to date on German painter, photographer and sculptor Günther Förg. It will offer an important new perspective on this extraordinary and complex artist. Prior to joining the DMA, Delahunty served as the Head of Exhibitions and Displays at Tate Liverpool, part of the family of Tate galleries, and previously as Curator at the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art. He is published widely, with recent essays on Walter de Maria (DMA/Yale), Jackson Pollock (Tate Publishing), Carl Andre (JPR|Ringier), Padraig Timoney (Electa Mondadori), Giorgio Griffa (Fundazione Carriero), Ellsworth Kelly (Phaidon) with forthcoming texts on Laura Owens and Günther Förg. During his tenure at the DMA Delahunty has acquired major works by significant artists including Stephen Antonakos, Frank Bowling, Walter de Maria, Sam Gilliam, Giorgio Griffa, Sarah Lucas, William McKeown, Julie Mehretu, Jackson Pollock, Joan Semmel, Keith Sonnier, Haim Steinbach, and Rebecca Warren

The George Economou Collection

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