

## The Beholder's Share

Philip Akkerman, Robert Bordo, Nogah Engler, Louise Hopkins, Merlin James, Tom LaDuke, Carol Rhodes, Julie Roberts, David Schutter, Christopher Stevens

13 October – 4 December 2010

Private view: Tuesday 12 October, 6-8pm

Opening hours: Wednesday – Saturday, 11am – 6pm and by appointment.

The gallery will also be open from 12-5pm on Sunday 17 October to coincide with the Frieze Art Fair.

Mummery + Schnelle is pleased to announce the opening of a group exhibition that asks how it might be possible to situate in the space of the present, references to the historicity of painting. Painting is a practice that allows for a critical dialogue with itself and its histories, but is this dialogue, as some would argue, a conservative and reactionary one, representing the regressive security of a return to pre-modern modes of representation, a resuscitation of old myths and visual tropes from the past? *The Beholder's Share* sets out to argue that this is not, necessarily, the case. Every painting contains the memory of *painting*, but a good painting possesses a consciousness of its genre that allows it to transcend it without parody or irony, reflecting a positive, reactivated sense of the tradition, not a received experience of the past. This re-activated sense of tradition is one that permits a critical consciousness of the present and enables an active exploration of the continued potential of painting.

All the works in *The Beholder's Share* are "studio paintings". Another aim of the exhibition is to ask what this term might be said to mean in today's world of globalized image networks. It posits that the studio is a condition, as well as a site, of working and its realities are not only what is observed there, but also the artist's visual and often bodily, or phenomenological, experience of the world and how it is put together.

If the studio is a place where the changing conditions of pictorial knowledge are tracked by the artist, then the art gallery is a place where they are reflected in the responses of the viewer to the works displayed there. A third aim of the *The Beholder's Share* is to address the position of the viewer and ask about the degree to which looking at a painting is, on the one hand a creative act and, on the other, what Ernst Gombrich called 'guided projection'. Has our perception of symbolic material changed significantly in our digitalized age and, if so, what are the implications for such an ancient medium as painting?

*The Beholder's Share* will feature work by gallery artists, Robert Bordo, Louise Hopkins, Merlin James, Carol Rhodes and Christopher Stevens, alongside artists whose work shares similar concerns, but who have not shown at Mummery + Schnelle before. Nogah Engler's allegorical paintings are powerful reflections on the Holocaust. Los Angeles based Tom LaDuke incorporates in his paintings images from film stills, models made in his studio and details taken from Old Master paintings. Julie Roberts, showing work in London for the first time in ten years, is represented by a painting from a series based on her research into the first female students at Glasgow School of Art. Research also underpins the work of David Schutter, whose set of five exhibited paintings are analyses and re-realizations of the surface of Jacob van Ruisdael's c. 1670-75 painting *Haarlem Seen from the Northwestern Dunes*.

A guide with notes on each of the paintings in the exhibition is in preparation and will be available from the gallery soon.

Forthcoming exhibition: ***The Solo: A film by Andrew Cross featuring Carl Palmer.***

Screenings from 12-15 January 2011.

If painting has sometimes been maligned as a contemporary artistic medium, the same can also be said of the drum solo. Seeking to redeem the latter, Andrew Cross has made a film with Carl Palmer, the drummer of 70s prog-rock super group Emerson, Lake & Palmer, that is expressive of the drum solo's singularity of form and musicality. *The Solo* continues Cross's exploration of music, memory and Englishness. It was first shown at Ikon Eastside in July 2010.

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