

Francis Upritchard
War Dance

June 27 – August 9, 2013

June 13, 2013—For her full-scale New York gallery debut, Francis Upritchard – a London-based New Zealander who represented her country at the 2009 Venice Biennale – stages eight figurative sculptures seemingly engaged in a ritualistic war dance. Quite unlike the traditional fierceness of such stylized warfare however, Upritchard's figures appear to prepare for a different kind of battle, showing off skills of a different nature. Stance, expression, and garb of these delicately modeled sculptures are focused yet tender and soft, at times leaning towards awkward, limp and visceral.

Gestures, especially of the hands and elongated fingers, suggest a determined dreamy-ness and wistfulness. The figures' skin is built up as if made of wax; their facial expressions and half-closed eyes are introverted and withdrawn. All in all, these dancers move closer to the delirious state of a rave than the ferociousness of mock combat.



Alluding to a variety of cultural and temporal influences, Upritchard's work intimates how effectively the past can be reinterpreted, even manipulated. Here, the artist takes inspiration from medieval sources such as the 11th century Bayeux tapestry as well as the woodcarvings by Northern-Renaissance sculptor Erasmus Grasser, whose work captured the Moresca pantomime and its origins in the sword and mumming dances performed by troupes of jesters and actors at court and in the streets.

A catalog book published on the occasion of Upritchard's exhibition at the Nottingham Contemporary accompanies the exhibition.

Upritchard's work has most recently been featured in solo exhibitions at the Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, Japan (2013); Nottingham Contemporary, UK (2012); Cincinnati Contemporary Art Center, Cincinnati (2012); 53 Venice Biennale, Italy (2009); Artspace, New Zealand (2005). Her work has been included in group shows such as *Lilliput*, New York High Line, New York (2012); *An Exchange with Sol LeWitt*, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art - MASS MoCA, MA (2011); *New Zealand at the Venice Biennale 2009*, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, New Zealand (2010); *TarraWarra Biennial 2008*, *Lost & Found: An Archeology of the Present*, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Australia (2008).

The exhibition will open on Thursday, June 27 and run through Friday, August 9, 2013. After July 4th the gallery is open Monday through Friday, 10 am - 6 pm. For further information and images, please contact the gallery at (t) 212.367.9663, (f) 212.367.8135 or email: nahna@antonkerngallery.com.

Upcoming exhibitions: Jonas Wood (September 12 – October 19, 2013)

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