

**Matthew Monahan**

October 10 – November 15, 2008

September 17, 2008, New York—For his fourth solo show at Anton Kern Gallery, Los Angeles-based artist Matthew Monahan assembled a group of fragmented figurative sculptures filled with mystery, boldness, and grace. Monahan combines glass, foam, honeycomb mesh, and treated paper in a manner that, at times, these elements are lifted off the ground, ostensibly defying the laws of gravity and hovering weightlessly in space.



Monahan has closed the ancient door to the curiosity cabinet that has so inspired his earlier work, and has left for the open field of large-scale sculpture. The former multitude of displays containing deranged varieties of wax figures, paper sculptures, ornamental drawings, and other artifacts, has given way to larger dimensions and bold gestures, to a monumental language of direct physicality, erupting emotions, and barely constrained potency. The sense of mystery, however, of the early *Wunderkammer* remains.

One can feel the sculptures' physical tension and their urgent need to crack the boundaries imposed by the artist's sculpting knife and the industrial materials. The figures are captured in the moment of breaking through these constraints and becoming re-animated. Their metal-leaf covered faces shimmer in the light. The work oscillates between the material and immaterial, between the abstract and allegorical, the light and heavy-weight, the sharply cut and gracefully modeled. They are monuments of historical and cultural bewilderment, existing in a realm where science-fiction, classicism, Buddha and modernism coexist.

Monahan's work has recently been presented in the 55<sup>th</sup> *Carnegie International*, Pittsburgh, the *Sonsbeek Sculpture Exhibition*, Arnhem (both 2008), the Hammer Museum, *Unmonumental* at the New Museum, *USA Today* at the Royal Academy, London (all 2007), as well as the *Berlin Biennale* and the *Whitney Biennale* (both 2006). Recent one-person shows include exhibitions at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art and the Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (both 2007).

The exhibition will open on Friday, October 10 and will run through Saturday, November 15, 2008. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am - 6 pm. For further information and images, please contact Christoph Gerozissis or Michael Clifton at (t) 212.367.9663, (f) 212.367.8135 or email: [info@antonkerngallery.com](mailto:info@antonkerngallery.com).

**Upcoming exhibition: Jonas Wood (November 20 – December 23, 2008)**

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