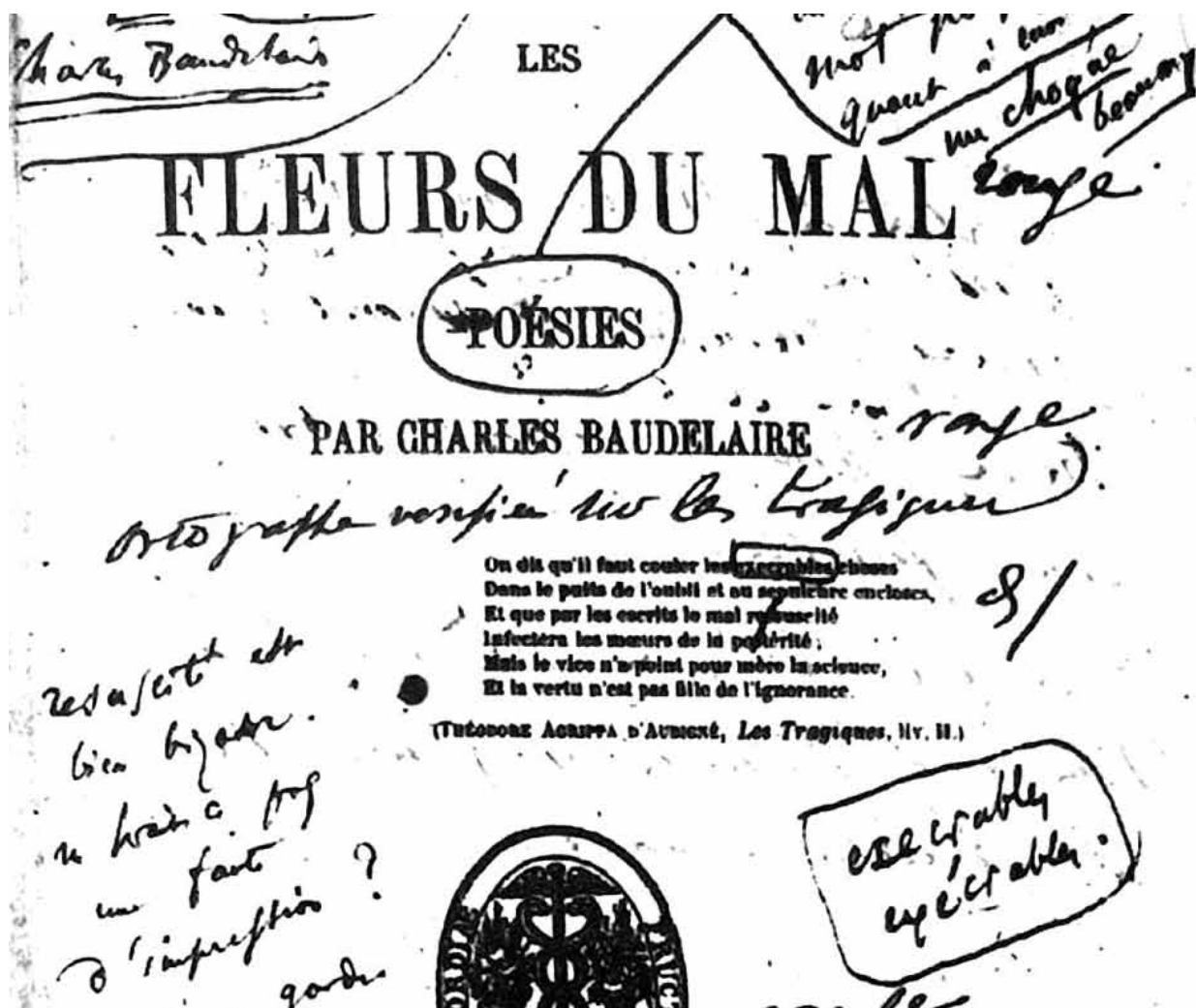


“LES FLEURS DU MAL”

curated by isabella goebel and alexandra von stosch

The exhibition title unites the antagonisms wherein life vibrates: beauty and abyss, blossom and decay, ecstasy and unfulfilled desire...

These are the connotations in Charles Baudelaire's collection of poems which inspired him to the title "LES FLEURS DU MAL" in 1857.



Frontispiece of the original 1857 edition of LES FLEURS DU MAL, annotations by Charles Baudelaire

*L'Amour est assis sur le crâne
De l'Humanité, Et sur ce trône le profane,
Au rire effronté,*

*Souffle gaiement des bulles rondes
Qui montent dans l'air, Comme pour
rejoindre les mondes Au fond de l'éther...*

program

opening	wed 19 oct 2011	12 am
opening hours	daily	12-7 pm
guided tours	sat 22 oct 2011 sun 23 oct 2011	4 pm
lecture	fri 28 oct 2011	6 pm
final day	sat 29 oct 2011	12-7 pm

LES FLEURS DU MAL

A programmatic exhibition featuring a dialogue of relevant positions of contemporary art in reference to art history



1 lois renner, Supraporte, 2010, c-print, diasec, 180 x 140 cm

prologue

The exhibition title unites the antagonisms wherein life vibrates: beauty and abyss, blossom and decay, ecstasy and unfulfilled desire... These are the connotations in Charles Baudelaire's collection of poems which inspired him to the title "LES FLEURS DU MAL" in 1857. These poems have influenced art, literature, film and music ever since. How are these counterpoles felt and expressed today? And how do they stand in reference to the artists' experience in history? munichmodern11 stages these artistic concepts, also in the wake of the 10th memorial of September 11. Do we still worship the golden calf and dance on the volcano? Or is there space to retreat into the delicacy and contemplation of still life and to indulge in its opulent associations?

Follow us on a voyage along the borders of existential reflections and sensations.



2 marc quinn, Untitled, 2008, acryl on polaroidphotos, diptychon, 10,3 x 17,8 cm

the curators

dr. isabella goebel

initiated munichmodern in 2005. Since then she has curated conceptual shows of today's art in the context of history of art. She received a teaching assignment from Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität and lectures on entrepreneurial structures within the cultural sector of the arts. She holds degrees in Economics and Finance at Stern School of Business, New York University and History of Art at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich. She edited artist catalogues on Hans Staudacher and David Salle.

dr. alexandra von stosch

is a Berlin based author and curator, trained in art history in Munich, Paris and NYC. She has published monographs and articles on contemporary art and is teaching at Humboldt University Berlin, next to her work in national art juries and as a member of the board of international art initiatives. In her current research she focuses on transdisciplinary synergies in contemporary culture and history: science, literature, music, film and art.

about modern

- / munichmodern initiates a lively and versatile dialogue on significant conceptual issues of today's art in the context of history of art.
- / munichmodern engages in an artistic mentoring and talent program, to be presented in synergy with established artistic positions.
- / munichmodern collaborates internationally with renowned artists, galleries, collectors and curators in producing sales exhibitions and promoting art projects since 2005.

impressum

munich modern / brienerstr.1
80333 munich / germany

t +49 89 25558-147
f +49 89 25558-100
info@munichmodern.com
www.munichmodern.com

initiator: dr. isabella goebel

project management:
johanna singer, m.a.

A common feature of the artists presented in this show is the fascination with aesthetics and formalistic studies while being fully aware – and most often even staging openly – the hidden abyss of passions, desires, experienced tragedies and the impact of history. What this exhibition is aiming to show is the staging of the gap between form and content, the never to be reached balance in life that is such a dear subject to the young Baudelaire, expressed in poems such as "Une Martyre", "Femmes Damnées" or in particular "L'Amour et le Crane". And it is the individualistic struggle each of us face even more so these days by defining who we are and where we belong, what part of the abyss we allow to surface and how we deal with it. Life is ultimately an artistic question: Which image from ourselves do we shape and follow?

„Lecteur paisible et bucolique (...) si, sans se laisser charmer, Ton oeil sait plonger dans les gouffres, Lis-moi, pour apprendre à m'aimer; Âme curieuse qui souffres Et vas cherchant ton paradis, Plains-moi!... Sinon, je te maudis!"

Charles Baudelaire

beauty & abyss

Unlike any other artist of the 20th century, andy warhol shows a talent for the celebration of the surface by scrutinizing the abyss lying underneath. This silkscreen is part of the series "Ladies and Gentlemen" portraying

transvestites. Instead of staging the usual glamour accessories, Warhol blurs the contours like in a reverse picture of Dorian Gray and reflects visually the ambiguity of gender inherent in any person: identity as an option.

robert mapplethorpe's artistic talent lies in an almost classic sense of harmony and balance of forms, staging the erotic force of bodies and flowers alike in a reminiscence of the "straight photographers" and Edward Weston of the beginning of the century. Still, Mapplethorpe, who passed untimely away in 1989, is unpaired in staging the



3 andy warhol, Ladies and Gentlemen, 1975, acrylic and silkscreen on canvas, 35 x 28 cm

presence of the hidden force, all too often a dark one.

The highly decorated Austrian artist lois renner is a good example for the capacity to express contemporary issues of shape and individual form in view of art historical strategies. In a baroque vein, he paints whole ceilings, just like Tiepolo, in order to broaden our view towards a highly specific dialogue of colors and shapes. Different than appropriation art in the 1980s that set forth to undermine the idea of originality, Lois Renner plays with art

historical icons to test our perception and to create an individual viewpoint. "Lieber Maler-Fürst als Foto-Graf", he says, staging a German pun in a recent interview and stresses that he prefers to excel in painting rather than being a master of photography – while he actually questions and excels in both.

New York artist and global citizen bettina witteveen has an ardent sense for deconstructing myths of Western history in order to



4 robert mapplethorpe, Flower with Knife, 1985, silver gelatin print, 51 x 41 cm



5 bettina witteveen, Kali Hecate II, 2003, c-print, 45,7 x 45,7 cm

refigure them in the context of Asian and African rites and experiences. She has collaborated with avant-garde stage director Robert Wilson prior to her iconic photo installations „Death and the Maiden“ or „The ErlKing“, celebrated in Berlin.

© courtesy of: Kuckei + Kuckei, Berlin; Galerie Thomas Modern, Munich; Galerie Andreas Binder, Munich; Galerie Stefan Roepke, Cologne; Studio BettinaWitteveen, Berlin/NewYork

still-life & allegory



6 david salle, Penobscot, 2011, oil and acrylic on linen and canvas, 213.4 x 325.1 cm

Setting the pulse for LES FLEURS DU MAL is a grand painting by the American artist david salle. His technique of simultaneous pictorial presentation of various stages of perception, often involving female bodies in torsion, refers certainly to surreal techniques and stream of consciousness. Recent research has revealed correlations to film and cinematic strategies such as cut and paste. Salle's work represents a visual counterpoint to Baudelaire's literal flow of images, as in "Allegorie".

thorsten brinkmann's colorful compositions come across like 17th century master paintings, a period that for the first time celebrated everyday objects. It takes a second and third look to understand the humor and sense of formal investigation behind these photographs of found mundane objects, most often rubbish, that shape themselves into our visual memory. The fairytale titles, like "Fram la Plüm" only add to the creation of a carefully composed, subtle artistic universe.



7 thorsten brinkmann, Fram la Plüm, 2009, c-print, 67 x 50 cm

For his overwhelming flower paintings, British artist tim maguire uses a particular technique of applying three photographs, taken just seconds apart, to which he attributes a primary color each. They serve as support for his paintings, as reference to the "real", while reflecting on the possibilities of painting in the 21st century.

One of the younger artists in this show is the American justin richel, born 1979. His work reflects clearly a fascination for 18th century narration and satire, but installs a captivating visual language of its own. Across genres like painting, installation and video he achieves an impressively consistent compositional sophistication.



LET'S PARTY
FOR A PIECE OF ART

David Salle, Untitled, 2011, ink on paper, 29 x 23 cm, courtesy of David Salle and Maureen Paley, London

+49-89-28805190
www.pin-freunde.de

CHARITY AUCTION in support of
PINAKOTHEK DER MODERNE Munich
19 november 2011

PIN. FREUNDE DER
PINAKOTHEK DER MODERNE E.V.

© courtesy of: Maureen Paley, London; FeldbuschWiesner, Berlin; Andreas Binder, Munich; Galerie Voss, Düsseldorf

femmes damnées



8 mel ramos, Hollywood Suite #5 Y, 2009, oil on canvas, 102 x 76 cm

The Californian artist mel ramos is one of the few remaining representatives of Pop Art. He started out as a painter of comics, just like Roy Lichtenstein, but then shifted his fascination for Batman and Superman to female super heroes and pin-up figures. Ramos certainly is a master in the Pop Art approach to emulate advertising strategies in order to manipulate emotions. As such, he appropriated famous classic and modern paintings by Ingres, Modigliani and Monet to give them a more explicit approach.

*„Que la beauté du corps est un sublime don
Qui de toute infamie arrache le pardon.“*

Charles Baudelaire

A counterpoint to all these "Femmes Damnées" is shown in stephan

balkenhol's bronze of a single man dressed in black pants. His position seems to incorporate a firm and at the same time hesitant "I'm still standing", almost as if he could not believe it himself. Stephan Balkenhol's roughly carved out wood sculptures have been landmarks in the three-dimensional art world, continuing relentlessly the figurative stance even through periods when figuration seemed out of place... Today, figures offer a welcome refuge to the orientation seeking art lover - who has been trained to read pictorial subtexts.



9 stephan balkenhol, Mann mit schwarzer Hose, 2010, bronze, 24 cm

© courtesy of: Galerie Hilger, Vienna; Fred Torres Collaborations, New York

The eminent American artist david lachapelle shows a distinct compositional sense for story telling within the frame of one image. Swiftly switching

kept the secrets of his creative process to himself. This triptych refers in its technique to a larger painting currently shown at the Lever House



10 david lachapelle, Studies and Sketches 3, 2008-11, ink, water color, paper on cardbord, (over all) 28 x 59 cm

among genres and epochs in his photographed tableaux vivants, he re-interpretes fundamental themes in art history such as life, death and religion. For the first time, the European public gets a glance at his studies and sketches in the triptych we present here: Before, LaChapelle

Art Collection, New York. Both convey the artist not only as a complex story-teller and aesthetic composer, but more surprisingly, with a painterly approach.

vanitas

The Berlin based photographer josef fischnaller was included in this show due to his explicit sense of vanitas compositions: He is quoting status symbols such as Damian Hirst's diamond skull and the soap bubbles Baudelaire mentioned in "L'amour et le crane" in a contemporary celebration of the fugaciousness of luxury. Fischnaller's mise-en-scène plays with the nostalgic connotations of kitsch by stretching the limits of the iconic idea of vanitas.



11 josef fischnaller, Vanitas, 2010, c-print on dibond, diasec 60 x 100 cm

12 heather rowe, Untitled, 2010, wood, glass, mirror, wallpaper, frames, paint, 86 x 59,3 x 25 cm



13 michael wesely, Stilleben (15.7.-22.7.2008), 2008, c-print on aluminium, 125 x 145 cm

© courtesy of: Galerie Hilger, Vienna; Galerie Zink, Berlin; Nusser&Baumgart, Munich; Galerie Andreas Binder, Munich

*„La tête, avec l'amas de sa crinière sombre
Et de ses bijoux précieux, Sur la table de nuit,
comme une renoncule, Repose; et, vide
de pensées, Un regard vague et blanc comme
le crépuscule S'échappe des yeux révoltés.”*

Charles Baudelaire

yigal ozeri is a New York based painter who was born in Israel. His photo-realistic rendering in traditional old master technique narrates stories where the - mostly female - protagonists are seemingly woven into weeds and melting into the landscape. There is no estrangement between (wo)man and nature, and still we wonder: What happened? "I tell reality as it is. In my paintings you feel the moment, the smell, the breath."



14 yigal ozeri, Untitled (Lizzie Smoking), 2010, oil on paper on wood, 30,5 x 46 cm

scull & amor

The Japanese photo-artist izima kaoru plays on the theme on nature and female figures, yet it is rather "death and the maiden" that comes to mind, here. The photographer stages individually envisioned scenes of death in relation to campaigns of various labels like Gucci or Alexander McQueen. Just as Baudelaire describes in his poems, it is the fascination of danger and threat that imbues perception with passion.



15 izima kaoru, Nagasaku Hiromi wears Louis Vuitton #222, 1999, c-print on aluminium, 79 x 100 cm

*„Ne me regarde pas ainsi, toi, ma pensée!
Toi que j'aime à jamais, ma soeur d'élection,
Quand même tu serais une embûche dressée.
Et le commencement de ma perte!”*

Charles Baudelaire

davide la rocca's paintings look so familiar at first glance. We all cannot help but being fascinated by Hollywood icons like Uma Thurman and Ethan Hawke, and we have hardly ever gotten so close to them. A second look reveals that these film stills represent mere pretexts for a different play on light, shadow and color. The dots, which the Italian artist applies in a pointillist way - reminis-



16 davide la rocca, Irene bn2, 2011, oil on canvas, 40 x 60 cm

cent of Georges Seurat -, paradoxically reflect at the same time the technical principle of stripping down any pictorial phenomenon to an anonymous set of dots. We seldom find such beauty in the process of deconstruction.

The impresario and multi-talented jonathan meese questions the authority of history itself and tests its iconic relevance for today. His free expression of color, forms, use of language and historical or popular icons form into a new pictorial universe, stretching all limits possible. "Long live the Dictatorship of Art!"



17 jonathan meese, Don Thriller, 2008, oil on canvas, 40 x 40 cm

It is hard to resist the impact of the delicate, obsessive ink drawings of bodies in apocalyptic pain by conceptual artist ralf ziervogel. Moving literally into the space his increasingly abstract work reveals an analytic "play on systems" evoking Sol Lewitt's serial approach. Ziervogel

lives in Berlin where he develops a grand public art project, ECCE, for the area of former Airport Tempelhof.

Munich artist jan davidoff masters the appropriation of everyday objects and impressions to translate them into delicate ornaments of individual poetry. For LES FLEURS DU MAL Davidoff dealt with the subject of vanitas in a captious way, using the shiny surface of found, discarded metal to create a "speculum". It is a painted mirror, the skull being discretely integrated into an elaborate net of lines and floral decorum.



18 ralf ziervogel, 03_OT (Every Adidas Got Its Story), 2011, ink on paper, 23,9 x 21,6 cm

19 jan davidoff, Speculum, 2011, oil on metal, 101 x 81 cm

© courtesy of: Galerie Andreas Binder, Munich; Galerie Voss, Düsseldorf; Studio Ralf Ziervogel, Berlin; Studio Jan Davidoff, Munich

end of the day

claudia rogge's artistic material is human mass: The Düsseldorf based photographer stages friends and fans in apocalyptic scenes, taking thousands of photographs to compose them digitally into perfect settings which remind of art historical predecessors in painting. The dramatic effect caters to the growing need of artistic expressions of the current feeling of crisis - in financial terms and also in view of the dawn of the Western world as we knew it.



20 claudia rogge, EverAfter Purgatory I, 2011, lambda on alu-dibond, 165 x 215 cm

„Le globe lumineux et frêle Prend un grand essor, Crève et crache son âme grêle Comme un songe d'or.”

Charles Baudelaire

As the New York critic Roberta Smith pointed out, the Dutch painter aaron van erp is certainly meant to take over the torch from his Belgian colleague Luc Tuymans. Yes, we can identify figures and situations in mysterious settings, but there is a micro-narrative in Francois Lyotard's sense involved that remains to be deciphered. Van Erp's paintings are like variations of (probably censored) intermissions, albeit individually staged with perfect sense of space, light and drama.



21 johannes evers, video still from "Dionysos", 2010

The videos by johannes evers are unique in today's increasingly present video scene, as they are not trying to emulate Hollywood narratives. There is a sense of deceleration, a voyeuristic desire to understand "the making of" paintings in the artist's studio. This staging of the traditional idea of the "tableau vivant", in which Evers plays himself the protagonist, is questioning the core of the creative process, a self-referential study in a curated dialogue with revered art historians.

Parallel to his career as a musician and composer, José Maria Cano turned to fine arts in the aftermath of 9/11. The seductive force of status - women as well as Wall Street - has been Cano's favorite subject of contemplation. His bullfight studies were shown at the Picasso Foundation in Malaga. Cano's new work for this show features a winter impression of the Bundesbank - as if holding breath under an oppressive layer of oil paint?

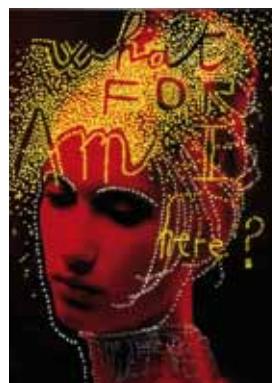


22 José Maria Cano, Bundesbank, 2011, oil on canvas, 185 x 142,5 cm

|| © courtesy of: Galerie Voss, Düsseldorf; Studio Johannes Evers, Munich; Studio José Maria Cano, Madrid; FeldbuschWiesner, Berlin

In the 1990s Swiss artist danielle buetti became known to the art public for "scarring" supermodel portraits with designer brand names. With his series of lightboxes buetti went even further: After bruising the models' flesh, now, he stabs right through the image. These

minute holes form self-reflective phrases such as "What For Am I Here"? Especially in tune with this show's topic is the skull series which seems to embody the current state of the globe, shown in-midst the passionate moment of being torn apart by dark forces of greed, ambition, lust...



23 danielle buetti, Blue Skull on Red Surface, 2011, mixed media, 50 x 40 cm

24 danielle buetti, What For Am I Here, 2011, mixed media, 170 x 145 cm