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MIKE BOUCHET «CANBURGER»

25 JANUARY - 1 MARCH 2008

OPENING ON THURSDAY 24 JANUARY 2008

Bite my Buns, Swallow my Meat.
Taste the Fire in the Cave

The central element of Mike Bouchet's latest exhibition, CANBURGER, are the 10,000 canned burgers which he produced for this piece. Working with a meat canning company in Germany, Bouchet has developed a hamburger in a can, with a shelf life of two years. The hamburger is sandwiched between two buns, has tomato catsup and mustard already on it, and has a pull top lid for easy opening. The CANBURGER is a starting point for a larger investigation into some of the more manifest issues involved in hamburger consumption. Ever the «Internationalist», Bouchet has also generated sculptures and large paintings for this exhibition that touch upon some of the more deep-seated issues surrounding food production and consumption in today's world, from fast-food restaurants to canned military rations and american survivalist movements.

While the large scale photo-realistic paintings of hamburgers take fetishistic food photography to its grotesque limits, the bronze hamburger sculpture (and shiny metallic hamburger cans) also take the current trend for what can be called «spectacular materiality» to its uncomfortable extreme.

As in some of his other work, Bouchet has also replicated conventional marketing strategies, distributing free samples of the CANBURGER in Paris's oldest market, Les Enfants Rouges. The CANBURGER thus follows on the footsteps of earlier projects, such as Carpe Denim, but in a far more extreme manner, producing works that confront the viewer with their brash materiality, in a humorous yet lucid appropriation of the spectacle-driven tactics of contemporary media and advertising.

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