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Mike Bouchet Impulse Strategies



18
March
—
23
April
2011

OPENING

Thursday 17 March
2011

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FORTHCOMING EXHIBITION

28 April - 1 May
Art Brussels
(booth 1D-06)

6 May - 10 June
"The Big Society"
curator : Alice Motard

Since the early 1990s, Californian artist Mike Bouchet has been questioning social processes and structures in his work in a variety of forms including paintings, sculptures, installations, actions, performances, and videos. His practice focuses on issues such as consumerism and the construction of systems of values, while always reflecting on his role as an artist, therefore creating a new profile the "artist-entrepreneur."

Whether he designed his own label of jeans for «Carpe Denim» (2004), proposed a catalogue of luxury and extravagant swimming-pools, invented his own brand of Cola (that he would eventually use as pigment for a series of paintings) or had 10,000 hamburgers in golden tins produced by a German meat company for "Canburger," his last solo show at the Gallery in 2008: Mike Bouchet always unfolds concise pictures of complex economic and cultural contexts and the desires connected with them.

The artist 'mimics marketing strategies at a parodic remove, creating a line of exclusive, handmade objects that, in keeping with the logic of luxury goods, are both tied together in a series and differentiated by their singular touches (...). But these products are obviously not designed to succeed in a real-market situation, and their design aesthetic often evokes the ersatz articles and failed product-ventures that crowd the aisles of discount stores.'*

"Impulse Strategies" will be presenting a number of recent works by the artist. As the title of the show suggests it, those works, which may strike us as mere ironical appropriations at first sight, register the prevailing themes of our time: the predominance of entertainment, sex and consumerism, the promotion of impulse buying through an environment where consumers can be relieved of their negative perceptions of impulse. With humor, Mike Bouchet is exploring those strategies and transforms on this occasion the gallery in a strange office carpeted from floor to ceiling.

Born in Castro Valley, California in 1970, Mike Bouchet is one of the most promising Californian artists from his generation. His interest in popular culture, consumer trends, and the genesis of personal fantasies places his work in direct lineage with his Californian precursors. From 1990 to 1993, Mike Bouchet studied at Calarts with Paul McCarthy and Richard Jackson. His work has recently gained a dramatic exposure with "Watershed" (2009) the spectacular installation realized for The 53rd Biennale di Venezia. (wooden house bought in kit and installed it in the harbor basin of the Arsenale in Venice). Recently, he had solo shows at the Frankfurt Schirn Kunsthalle and at Vienna BAWAG foundation.

*in Julien Bismuth, «Mike Bouchet: Celebrity Artist», 2005