



GALLERIA CONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS HABANA

Via del Castello 11, San Gimignano (SI), Italia

tel. +390577943134 | info@galleriacontinua.com | www.galleriacontinua.com

HANS OP DE BEECK

Small Things and Soothing Thoughts

Opening: Saturday May 14th 2016, Via del Castello 11, 6pm-midnight
Until 04.09.2016, Monday-Sunday, 10am-1pm, 2-7pm

Galleria Continua is pleased to present ***Small Things and Soothing Thoughts***, a solo show by Hans Op de Beeck, a prominent figure on the international art scene. The work of the Belgian artist is multidisciplinary, ranging from installations and sculptures to films, videos, photography, paintings, drawings, texts, theatre and music. He recently wrote and directed his first work for the theatre, *Nach dem Fest*, for the Schauspiel Frankfurt, also producing the sets, costumes and music.

The news can be fairly shocking, as demonstrated by the recent terrorist attacks in Brussels, where Hans Op de Beeck has his studio. However, the artist believes that artistic creation and the sharing of it with the public can be, in its own small way, of comfort and solace. "*A small gesture, a moment of silence and a reassuring thought are, especially at this time, of extreme importance for compensating ethically incomprehensible abominations*", declares the artist.

In what is his fifth solo show at Galleria Continua, the artist takes viewers through a succession of peaceful

places where they encounter life-size sculptural figures in monochrome grey. All the figures have their eyes shut, as if lost in a quiet moment of introspection, in silence, waiting. A fragile-looking youth, barefooted and in shorts, holds a dozen or so freshly picked blackberries carefully in his hand, as if they were jewels. A girl is drawing a piece of string into a geometric figure between her hands. A young woman is lying languidly on her side, eyes shut, lost in thought, with a lit cigarette and an ashtray and cell phone close to hand.

Among these silent, serene figures are some round tables: carved, apparently fluttering table cloths, with still lifes of small knick-knacks and trinkets; contemporary *memento mori* in which sculptures of drinking cups and pizza boxes lie alongside more classic *vanitas* objects such as candlesticks with unlit candles, open books or empty glasses, forming a singular whole.

The life-size human figures in monochrome grey, the still lifes, the animals, the natural elements and the small stage furnishings of this exhibition look as if they are petrified; frozen in time like life in Pompeii. And so even the most banal of objects becomes something special, with any child or adult becoming the moving symbol of the universally human. With this silent exhibition, the artist's aim is to create a moment of rest and also, without doubt, of consolation.

Hans Op de Beeck was born in Turnhout, Belgium, in 1969, and lives and works in Brussels. He has shown his work in many solo and group shows around the world. He has had solo exhibitions at important venues like GEM Museum of Contemporary Art, The Hague; the Museum for Contemporary Art MUHKA, Antwerp; the Centraal Museum, Utrecht; the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC; Kunstmuseum Thun; Centro de Arte Caja de Burgos, Burgos; Butler Gallery, Kilkenny; Kunstverein Hannover; Tampa Museum of Art, Tampa; Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville; FRAC Paca, Marseilles; MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Boston; MOCA Cleveland; Sammlung Goetz, Munich. Op de Beeck has also contributed to many group shows at places like the Reina Sofia, Madrid; Scottsdale

Museum of Contemporary Art (Arizona, US); Towada Art Center, Towada (Japan); ZKM, Karlsruhe; MACRO, Rome; Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; PS1, New York; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris; Wallraf-Richartz Museum, Cologne; Hangar Bicocca, Milan; Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; 21C Museum, Louisville, Kentucky; The Drawing Center, New York; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai; MAMBA, Buenos Aires; Haus der Kunst, Munich; Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Bologna; Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn. Works by Op de Beeck have been presented at the Venice Biennale; the Shanghai Biennale; the Aichi Triennale, Japan; the Singapore Biennale; the Art Summer University, Tate Modern, London; the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, India, and at many other art events.

For further information about the exhibition and for photographs:

Silvia Pichini, Communication Manager press@galleriacontinua.com, mob. + 39 3474536136