

I N M A N G A L L E R Y

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 30, 2010

Inman Gallery presents:

Weasel

Organized by Chelsea Beck and Kurt Mueller

November 6, 2010 – January 8, 2011

Opening Reception
Saturday November 6th, 6:00 – 8:00pm

Inman Annex, 3917 Main Street



Joe Zane, *Doppelganger*, 2008; hand blown glass; 18 x 16 x 14 inches courtesy the artist and Carroll and Sons, Boston

Hamlet: Do you see yon cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?
Polonius: By the mass, and 'tis like a camel indeed.
Hamlet: Methinks it is like a weasel.
Polonius: It is backed like a weasel.
Hamlet: Or like a whale?
Polonius: Very like a whale.
Hamlet: No, i' faith 'tis bear shaped.
Polonius: It doth darkeneth its countenance as a bear doth.

from Hamlet, Act III, Scene ii

Discursivity neglects to present a vision of the truth claim as contrapuntal rhetoric; instead it is satisfied by the apparent truth of the claim in even its meanest form, to say little of the linguistic tetherings which bind it to the *Sturm und Drang* of the material world. To negate a thing's existence draws it instead nearer to a tangible world form, ennobling it by virtue of floating ludic identity, imbuing it with the rage of lions long since ceased roaring. It is an act of violence to sever the optic nerve. It is an act of brilliance, however, to incite the audience to perform such self-directed surgery given a willingness to participate in its own deception. By such measures does Hamlet conduct Polonius through a meditative trance of representational receptivity in which the cloud both see above them transforms at Hamlet's will.

It is not by mere cogitation that one becomes a Minotaur. The fiction of the self enacts a fragile ego-grade disposition upon ultra- and super-classed ur-fictions, be they the products of ideological sharecropping, aspirational socioeconomic set pieces, ahistoric swelling, or some apt combination of the above. Limited transactional alliances may occur between the visual and the perceptible, but only under duress does a divergent plateau emerge from the thousand possibles. Technology is very strict on the following point: there are no Minotaurs,

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except plausible ones. If we enlarge “the plausible” to include other mazes, other teleological systems, and other strings by which to be led through said mazes, we must also challenge the inertia of sight. The rock that floats is not the same as the rock that sinks.

In this spirit, Inman Gallery is delighted to present *Weasel*, an exhibition of recent works by Maurizio Cattelan, Mads Lynnerup, Eva and Franco Mattes aka 0100101110101101.ORG, Jim Nolan, Brina Thurston, Karla Wozniak and Joe Zane. Comprising a wealth of generic practices, the demonstrably subtle effect of which being to lead, as Hamlet does, the viewer, as Hamlet does, “by the very nose,” *Weasel* endeavors to question rigid lineage(s) of perception in the visual. Works range from Cattelan’s sculptural caricature of hegemonic knee-jerking to Wozniak’s wry take on the American jeremiad, at all times confronting the viewer with a certainty of the abject.



Mads Lynnerup, *Now Firing*, 2010; silkscreen on paper;
24 x 18 inches; edition of 15; courtesy the artist and Lora
Reynolds Gallery, Austin

Weasel is co-organized by Chelsea Beck and Kurt Dominick, who have previously collaborated on projects such as Object Lesson: A Multitude and Drink Deep: Satirical Sketches from the Notebooks of Rudyard Kipling. This text was authored by S.E. Smith.

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Instances of representational confusion often result in a kind of situational glamour. Elmyr de Hory, now widely known thanks to his inclusion in Orson Welles' 1974 pseudo-documentary *F is for Fake*, was imprisoned on Ibiza after his prolific forgeries of Picasso, Modigliani, and Matisse were discovered to be inauthentic. Until such a time when international tribunals convene to sentence criminals guilty of metaphysical extortion, the only suitable fate for a hoaxist like de Hory seems to be mandatory residence on a glamorous island of earthly delight, an audience with a renowned director, and mostly epistolary friendships with starlets such as Jacqueline Bissette and Julie Newmar. Newmar counted herself a particular fan of de Hory's work, and went so far as to produce her own series of contemporary pop art pieces influenced by the likes of Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg. One of these, an assemblage of lipstick-stained Kleenex titled *Death Comes for Kitty*, was even sold into J. Paul Getty's personal collection and hung in his bathroom until 1974 when his fourth ex-wife Ann Rork discovered Newmar's very limited role in the kidnapping of their grandson, Jean Paul Getty III. (Newmar's ill-fated affair with the Italian Postmaster General was responsible for a delay in correspondence from the kidnappers. As a result, Jean Paul Getty III's ear was cut off.) Brina Thurston's video installation, *Harm* (2007), slyly references the piece, which Newmar later gave to de Hory as a gift.

Perhaps because art is subject to our deepest-seated beliefs about value and culture, any example of mistaken identity or intentional misrepresentation causes as much pain as a depth charge in the ocean. Working from an aesthetic position that permits any object to assert itself as art based on intention places an audience in the uncomfortable situation of sharing agency with the forger; a fiction is only successful once it has become credible, even if briefly. Strong reactions are imminent once the deception has been discovered because awareness highlights the already strained transaction between viewer and artist. To make matters worse, no exacting legal recourse is possible for such an offense. While the hoax artist may profit from his deception, particularly when he has produced letter-perfect copies

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of, say, a valuable Poussin, his real theft is unpunishable because he has stolen the wool from our eyes.

In this spirit, Inman Gallery is delighted to present *Weasel*, an exhibition of new works by Maurizio Cattelan, Mads Lynnerup, Eva and Franco Mattes aka 0100101110101101.ORG, Brina Thurston, Joe Zane, Jim Nolan, and Karla Wozniak. *Weasel* invites the viewer to contemplate the transactional benefits of deceptions that act as a foil for the idealized aesthetic experience. The intention here is not to frustrate but to tease—doubly, to play upon art-going conceptions and to tease out the inherent hopes with which one approaches a gallery wall. Like Julie Newmar’s wry assemblages, the pieces collected here explode the notion of aesthetic seriousness when confronted by the irreverent, joyful elisions of a cat-and-mouse game.



Mads Lynnerup, *Now Firing*, 2010; silkscreen on paper; 24 x 18 inches; edition of 15; courtesy the artist and Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin

Weasel is co-organized by Chelsea Beck and Kurt Mueller, who have previously collaborated on projects such as Liminal Sleep: Marina Abramovic and the Willful Obscure and Bad Axe: Margaret Kilgallen’s Pastoral Occlusions. Beck and Mueller are also preparing two upcoming projects: ESTATE, a gallery based out of their Houston Heights bungalow, and Women’s Intuition, a group exhibition. This text was authored by S.E. Smith.

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Joe Zane, *Doppelganger*, 2008; hand blown glass; 16 x 18 x 14 inches; courtesy the artist and Carroll and Sons, Boston

Inman Gallery presents *Weasel*, an exhibition of new works by Maurizio Cattelan, Mads Lynnerup, Eva and Franco Mattes aka 0100101110101101.ORG, Brina Thurston, Joe Zane, Jim Nolan, and Karla Wozniak. Works range from Cattelan's satirical caricature-qua-sculpture to Eva and Franco Mattes aka 0100101110101101.ORG's chatsploitation film in which Chat Roulette participants confront a shocking, grave image. The exhibition explores the transitive properties of visual rhetoric from a position of mutable expectation.

Confronted with the vagaries of modal time, we were like, *fuck that*. The only entertainment we could think of was cat fighting so we paid the girls to catfight. But there were no girls. Wednesday was getting off to a slow start. So we all waited for buses in our multi-colored jerkins, able to forget our mothers just long enough to tell a mediocre tit joke or two. It was Tuesday, Wednesday. The sun was slow getting off the blocks. Angelic tremolos in the guitar solo, funny faces in the dirt. We had a projected sense of self-importance, like the greatest generation except not as pussy-whipped. We had lived through the last of the disco moment, grew up during an era of crystals in coffee, thought nothing of such abundant riches. Occasionally, a bend, a glint. Kids damaged by an insidious new kind of dad. Like before, the enemy was everywhere. Unlike before, it was us.

Serious new developments: the lies of the pope, the tent worm situation in the upper Midwest. The things were multiplying, hanging milky hammocks over whole maples up and down the interstate. A shocking, grave image, like Julie Newmar in a body cast. They probably came from China, we reasoned, like everything else that stood a chance of fucking the American landscape, metaphorical and un-. Waking up I sometimes felt a buzz in my extremities. My pinky finger went numb the second I picked up a cold beer, a practice to which I had become more like than not to do most days.

I asked Shawna to come over and I was waiting on the front lawn with some firecrackers. I put them in a cookie tin so as not to scare the neighbors and she said, "What in the fuck are

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you doing?” So they will sound less like gunshots, I told her. You are more beautiful even than Julie Newmar, I told her. I saw the sacred thing. It was a weasel, it slipped away. It was Tuesday, Wednesday. I could have tricked the neighbors but I didn’t want to.

The history of the slam-dunk.
I think I saw a she-rabbit.
A field of indeterminate shape and size.
Be quiet, I’m peaking.
You are a terrible person.
Your friends are okay, though.

When I saw the sacred thing I fell to my knees and bowed before it like this:

OTL

A boy with a bag of snails hanging from the handlebar of his bicycle OTL OTL OTL OTL
Field of indeterminate shape and size OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
Nero as a kid OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
The letters of John Keats OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
The face behind the face OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
Raisins soaked in a plate of brandy OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
Sad Indians vs. football Indians OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
The goddamned dried-up Mississippi OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
Your dog is so strange OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
Totally unimportant plate of lentils in a Caravaggio painting OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
The history of the slam-dunk OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
The grease that shines on everything OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
Abject babes OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
Modal time OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
American country western music OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL
The weasel wakes at noon and slips away OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL OTL

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In his 1938 autobiography, *The Golden Trap*, Charles Ponzi writes, “To call me a thief ignores an unsubtle, unpleasant truth about the nature of the average person. The average person wishes for unearned wealth to fill up his pockets. He has been cautioned by the wisdom of the age that even to think so is sinful, but he nevertheless sins to wish for it. He covets this daydream as he might covet an erotic magazine, revisiting the thought often but not without shame and excitement in equal measure. What do I do when I sell part of his dream back to him? I facilitate a release. I permit him to drag the guilt and sin out into the light of day and divest it of its power. No one is more relieved than the swindled man. His countenance relaxes as it does after making love.”

Ponzi’s willful interpretation of his abilities as a confidence man may seem outrageous, but his assessment is far from incorrect. In October of 1922 when he was tried on the first ten counts of larceny, Ponzi, acting as his own attorney, charmed a “not guilty” verdict out of the jury. One might imagine that the incredible amount of money that had run through his hands would quash the sympathies of any juror, but instead of resenting his facility at “robbing Peter to pay Paul,” they seemed rather to admire or envy Ponzi.

Ponzi maintained his innocence until briefly before his death. In his last interview, he told an American reporter: “Even if they never got anything for it, it was cheap at that price. Without malice aforethought I had given them the best show that was ever staged in their territory since the landing of the Pilgrims! It was easily worth fifteen million bucks to watch me put the thing over.” It is fitting that Ponzi ultimately cast his con as pageantry, a \$15 million blockbuster better than any movie because its audience was necessarily implicated in its very existence. Ponzi eradicated any possibility of a neutral position from which to view his work.

Further engaging this trope, Inman Gallery presents *Weasel*, an exhibition of new works by Maurizio Cattelan, Mads Lynnerup, Eva and Franco Mattes aka 0100101110101101.ORG,

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Jim Nolan, Brina Thurston, Karla Wozniak, and Joe Zane. Comprising a wealth of generic practices, the exhibition seeks to prove the point that “no one is more relieved than the swindled man” by entangling the viewer in a net of his or her own devising. For example, the range of reactions captured by Eva and Franco Mattes aka 0100101110101101.ORG in *No Fun* (2010), an online performance which confronts Chat Roulette users with the image of a hanged man, speaks to the transgressive thrill of seeing an indelible, super-coded image which one outwardly hopes is fabricated but inwardly wishes to find authentic. The viewers oscillate between horror and amazement, their faces cast in a euphoric mien, perhaps akin to the release Ponzi speaks of in *The Golden Trap*. There is no neutral position in this gallery.



Mads Lynnerup, *Now Firing*, 2010; silkscreen on paper; 24 x 18 inches; edition of 15; courtesy the artist and Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin

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