

Exhibition File

ANDY WAUMAN - Post Everybody

3 May - 21 June 2009



Andy Wauman Post Everybody

This solo show by Andy Wauman, his second at DEWEER gallery, consists almost entirely of new works. It illustrates some major developments the work has gone through since his first exhibition at DEWEER three years ago. Wauman has clearly made choices, both in form and content. His experimental 'Black Marks' project, initiated at the Rijksakademie where he is currently a resident, resulted in a set of strategies which are likely to become recurrent elements in his esthetics. To name some: a more symbolical and reduced use of colour, the convergence of the written poetry with the visual work, a tighter relation between various objects within installations, and the increasing focus on complex ethical principles.

There is an upcoming generation of artists who were born in the seventies of the previous century and who borrow communicational means from the so-called popular culture and media to formulate a critique of the social and cultural context they grew up in. Within this generation, Wauman is working on his own position. Against the background of the current economic recession and the ensuing political and ideological polarization, his work seems to gain momentum. All of a sudden, the re-evaluation of social values and terminology, wearied by the past decades of 'good times', seems more urgent.

In Andy Wauman's work specifically this re-evaluation is a key element. We all pretend to know what authority means, we accept it and call for it when we feel threatened. But have we thought about what happens when it turns against us? Wauman asks us to redefine our attitude, or at least to question it. In other words, his work speaks about the possibility of freedom.

It would be a mistake, however, to see only this dimension or to interpret Wauman's work merely as a subdued form of social criticism. Wauman's goal is not political action either: there are far better ways to achieve this than to make art. In a process closely related to his writings, and sometimes even based on them, Wauman resamples images, symbols, words and metaphors which have been misused and copied so many times that they have lost their impact, and he gives them back their original glow.

Wauman likes to call himself 'a poetical terrorist'. His motivation lies in the conviction that a truly living culture can only arise from social structures. What Wauman is after is to incite true social awareness through romantic messages of hope and resistance.

Those messages are based on his analysis of social mechanisms. But Wauman's paintings, objects and sculptures are more than just illustrations of a theoretical discourse. They are conceived following the laws of a personal poetical system of associations, in which the use and treatment of unusual materials is a remarkable and important feature. About his choice of materials and the vision behind it, Wauman says: '...a recurrent element in my work is my preference for the sensuality and romantic value of the materials of the street, the ones the vagabond knows better than the bourgeois. '

All of this is evident in 'Post Everybody'. 'Authoritee' consists of seven tiles in uncolored plaster lying in a metal rack, in which the word 'authority' has been chiseled with a double 'e' to evoke a cry. The sculpture questions this problematic ethical principle both in form and in the application of materials: the tiles are made out of a fragile material, they could easily be taken out the frame they lie in because they are not fixed, and the height of the rack is perfect for it. A simple action would be enough to break the tiles: all one needs to do is to take them and drop them.

The other free standing sculpture shown here is 'Dance', a sculpture made for a participation in a groupshow organised by the GAMEC at the Sant'Agostino church in Bergamo. We could call it a typical 'Wauman', with its combination of irony, critique and romanticism. Again, and perhaps more evidently than in other works in this show, a very simple but balanced use of materials does it: the barbwire has obvious connotations which provoke a conflict with the word 'dance', and the work seems to express a call for – or a demonstration of – optimism within a context of despair.

On the longest wall of the space, Wauman presents a combination of three new works. There's the metal sculpture 'White Sentenced' and two paintings, 'Black Fall' and 'Drawing Rat's Breath For You'. The two last works mentioned refer to emotional and social terror. 'White Sentenced' is an interesting statement: it clearly alludes to the subtle, socially tolerated and 'well designed' aspect of contemporary repression in all its appearances. On the adjacent wall hang two 'pins', 'Stay in Body' and 'Gaze Monologue'.

As a whole, 'Post Everybody' is a show that testifies of the main themes Wauman is preoccupied with and of the waxing material vocabulary he uses to express them. But it also reads like a thematical chain of works. A booklet with a poem written by the artist, 'Broken Plumes of Sensation', is an important poetical guide to the show. The booklet is an edition but one copy is displayed on a socle. It illustrates once again how united words, images and forms are in the mind of this artist.

Biography

Andy Wauman was born in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1975. He currently lives and works in Antwerp and in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, where he is a resident at Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten.

He has exhibited solo at Open Art Space (Stuttgart, Germany), Art Statements Gallery (Hong Kong) and DEWEER gallery, who showed his work in 2007 and 2009. Wauman took part in group shows at Error One at Extra City (Antwerp, Belgium), 1st Brussels Biennial (off program at YUM 21C), Museum Küppersmühle for Modern Art (Duisburg, Germany), Martha Herford Museum for Contemporary Art (Herford, Germany), Space for Contemporary Art (Pesc, Hungary), Lokaal 01 (Breda, The Netherlands), Sant' Agostino Exhibiting Space in cooperation with GAMeC Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art (Bergamo, Italy), Gallery of Contemporary Art of Przemysl (Poland), Vis à Vis Art Lab (Xiamen, China) and in SuperHasselt at Z33 Centre for Contemporary Art (Hasselt, Belgium).

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exhibition views / works



clockwise:
Black Fall, 2009
White Sentenced, 2009
Stay In Body, 2009
Gaze Monologue, 2009
Heaven Ropes End, 2009

STAY
IN BODY

GAZE
MONOLOGUE

12



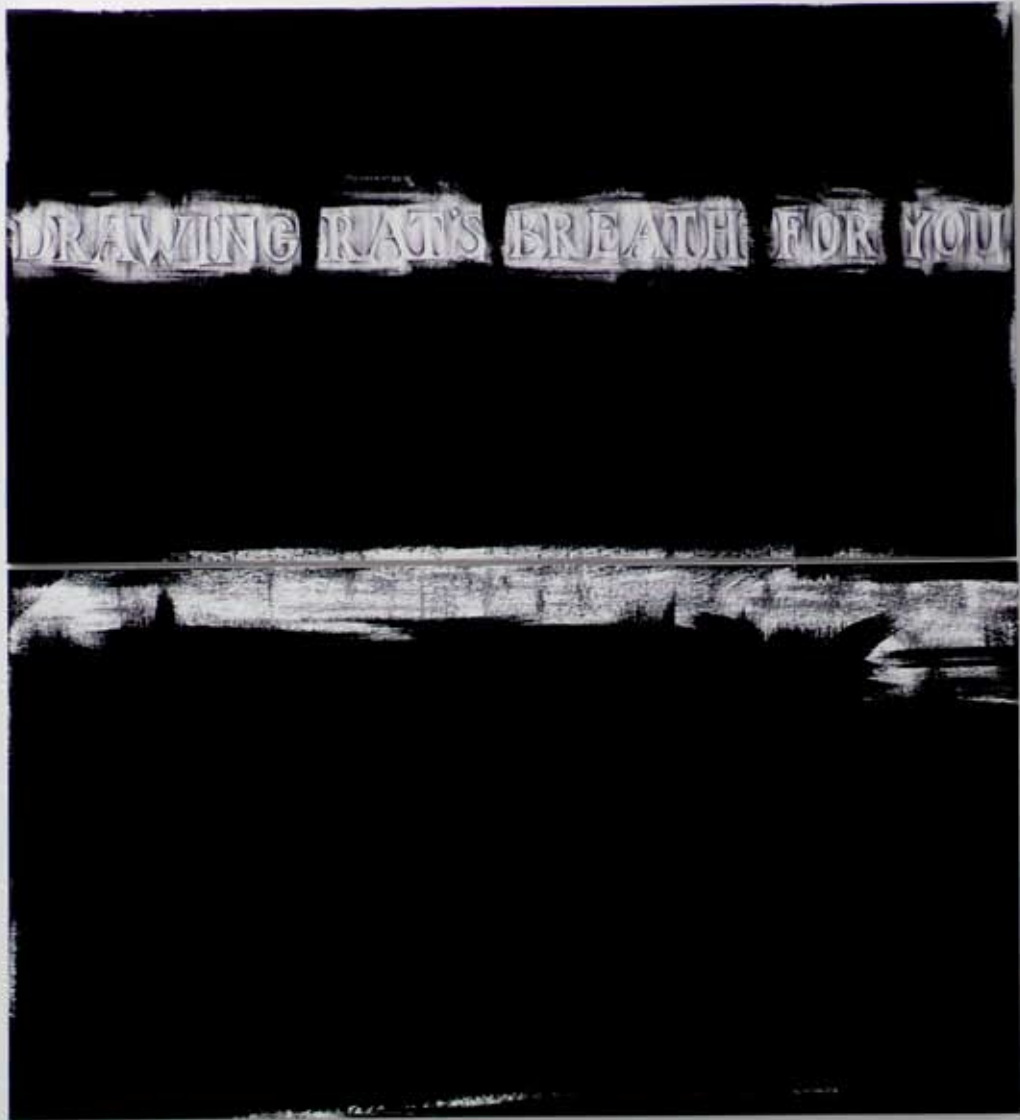
left: Black Fall, 2009
right: White Sentenced, 2009

WHITE
SENTENCE
NICED



clockwise:
Dance, 2006-2007
Drawing Rat's Breath For You, 2009
Black Fall, 2009





Drawing Rat's Breath For You, 2009





**STAY
IN BODY**



**GAZE
MONOLOGUE**



Post everybody.

Indifference native

As in love, rose turns away from the law together with the kisses, or the tears,
or the flowers.

Where to house the present?

No house for the heart.

Rose, their games struck you down. They'll break you with your name. And
with you on the pillow, they'll take us all the same.

Who knows who we are today?

Brothers in hope. Dancers of empty rooms. Foreigner's footprint of snow.

Wanderer's image, bare and still as good.

Rat, like money without a millionaire.

List of works

Authoritee, 2008 (AW2008-7), 7 plaster casts in iron rack, 7x (35 x 35 x 5 cm), h. 116 cm, w. 256 cm, d. 37 cm
Dance, 2006-2007 (AW22-2207), 5 parts, metal and barbewire, chromed, 5x (h.100 x d.60 x w.100 cm)
Drawing Rat's Breath For You, 2009 (AW2009-3), inkjet on canvas, 2x (110 x 200 cm)
Black Fall, 2009 (AW2009-2), inkjet on canvas, 2x (105 x 200 cm)
White Sentenced, 2009 (AW2009-1), lacquered aluminum, 199,4 x 158,2 x 4 cm
Stay In Body, 2009 (AW2009-6), lacquered metal, d. 99 cm
Gaze Monologue, 2009 (AW2009-7), lacquered metal, d. 99 cm
Heaven Ropes End, 2009 (AW2009-4), polypropylene multifilament rope, length ca. 6 m
Broken Plumes of Sensation, 2009, booklet with poem, 100 + XX A.P., signed and numbered by the artist

Andy Wauman - Post Everybody | DEWEER gallery | 3 May - 21 June 2009 (until 10 July by appointment only)
Opening hours Wednesday - Friday / Sunday 14:00-18:00, and by appointment (closed on 21, 22 and 31 May)
Road description On E17 (Antwerpen - Kortrijk) take exit 4 (N36), direction Ronse - after 7 kms, past the Gulf gasstation, take first right, direction Avelgem - after 1,5 kms: gallery on the left side