

[PRESS RELEASE]

Michaël Aerts - *The Immaculate Collection*

24.02 - 06.04.2008

opening 23.02.2008 15:00 - 18:30

in the presence of the artist

Deweer Art Gallery is pleased to announce the first solo show by Michaël Aerts at the gallery, *The Immaculate Collection*, an exhibition with exclusively new works.

Michaël Aerts makes objects, sculptures, installations and drawings. His works can be situated in the context of socio-cultural history and more specifically of the symbols and forms it created in art and architectural style since the Middle Ages.

Traces of the rich Belgian surrealist tradition and cultural inheritance are important elements in his iconography. Another significant feature is Aerts's particular interest in power induced imagery, such as globes and monuments.

The associative structure and iconographic content of the works reveal a passion for cultural styles and great in depth analysis of their meaning. Filip Luyckx, artistic director of Sint-Lukas Galerij (Brussels, BE) comments: 'Michaël Aerts appropriates various historical forms of which the significance is blurred to say the least. Modern day image culture constantly uses forms from different continents, eras and cultural layers. Michaël Aerts recognizes that untouchable form principles do not exist, because what we would like to perceive as a historical appearance is also the product of a past syncretism.'

The title for Michaël Aerts' exhibition is taken from Madonna's first greatest hits' album. It suggestively marks Aerts' fascination with contemporary popular culture, while also bringing his interest in religious iconography into play.

Quotation and paraphrasing have been a persistent strategy, developed by the artist in his drawings and sculptures. Through them, Aerts over the years has created a particularly complex body of work, focusing on different subjects: power, sexuality, mobility.

In the last year, Michaël Aerts has taken a keen interest in the obelisk. His appropriation of this form is a provocative statement about the status of monumental sculpture nowadays.

As art critic Björn Scherlippens comments: 'Traditionally, sculpture has always had a specific relation with its *locus*: it sits in a particular place and speaks in a symbolical manner about the meaning of that place. Extending this logic, one can say that the obelisk - morphologically - epitomizes sculpture: like a monumental needle, it ultimately marks the space. But through the obelisks of artist Michaël Aerts, the installation place is never invested in such an ideological fashion. More than projecting any sort of discourse on their site, the

obelisks seem to feel at ease everywhere. These sculptures then are essentially mobile characters, taking on the current society's credo's: communication and mobility as self-indulgent structures. Rather than beings, means, mobility and communication have turned into ending points themselves.

While critiquing this state of affairs, the art of Michaël Aerts never resides in defeatist pessimism. As demonstrated more than before by *The Immaculate Collection*, the artist consistently develops his critical thoughts, just as he further explores the formal elements in depth. This provides him with the basic ground to assume the claim for a different future. It delivers him the tools to envision new ways to live.'



Michaël Aerts, *Icarus - Love and Ambition*, 2007, drawing, mixed media on paper, 45x32cm

> the artist is available for interviews from 19 until 23.02. Please contact us for an appointment

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[exhibition hours] Wed-Sun 14:00-18:00 (fri 10:00-18.00) and by appointment [office hours] Mon-Fri 09:00-18:00 [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

www.deweerartgallery.com

Michaël Aerts

2001

Coming People, S.M.A.K., Ghent, Belgium

born in 1979, Dendermonde, Belgium
lives and works in Dendermonde, Belgium

www.michaelaerts.com

selected solo shows and projects

2008

The Immaculate Collection, Deweer Art Gallery, Otegem, Belgium

2007

Arteconomy / project for Concordia, Waregem, Belgium

2006

Onetwenty Gallery, Ghent, Belgium

2005

ArtBrussels, Sint-Lukas Galerij, Brussels, Belgium

2004

Galerie C. De Vos, Aalst, Belgium

2002

Sint-Lukasgalerij, Brussels, Belgium

selected group shows and projects

2007

Versus4, curators Christophe De Jaeger, Olivier Deprez and Björn Scherlippens, Site Pamele – Maagdendale, Oudenaarde, Belgium

Nighthawks, curator Christophe De Jaeger, Site Acec, Ghent, Belgium

Kick box project, S.M.A.K./Maria-Middelares, Ghent, Belgium

Carte blanche à l'Atelier 340, Comptoir asbl, Liège, Belgium

2006

Ephemerality, curator Christophe De Jaeger, Menen, Belgium

ArtBrussels, Onetwenty Gallery, Brussels, Belgium

Filiaal van de Hemel, Lokeren, Belgium

2005

Talentbeurs, Atelier340Museum, Brussels, Belgium

Missies, curator Stef van Bellingen, De Brakke Grond, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

2004

Mo(nu)ment@bornem, Bornem, Belgium

De Alpen, Netwerkgalerij, Aalst, Belgium

Vierkantswortel van het geheugen, curator Filip Luyckx, Huis Van Winckel, Belgium

2003

Fame Happening, Flanders Festival, Ghent, Belgium

Collectzie, Museum van Deinze en de Leiestreek, Deinze, Belgium

2002

M/V, Kunst-Zicht, Ghent, Belgium

The Pizza Project, curator Yasmine Nessah, Thermische Centrale, Ghent, Belgium