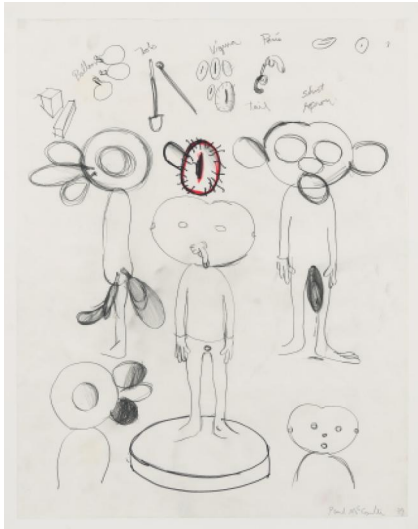


Search 41



Auction The Kasper König Collection - His Private Choice

Date 01.10.2024, ca. 18:30

MCCARTHY, PAUL
1945 Salt Lake City/USA

Title: Untitled.

Date: 1999.

Technique: Pencil and fiber pen on paper.

Measurement: 61 x 48cm.

Notation: Signed and dated lower right: Paul McCarthy 1999.

Frame/Pedestal: Framed.

Provenance:

- Gallery Krinzinger, Vienna
- Collection Kasper König, Berlin

Art of the American dream (trauma)

Paul McCarthy's work seems to be taken from a dream in which childhood and everyday life, fear and desire, art history and Hollywood are condensed into an ecstatic, penetrating visual language. The Californian artist expresses this across different media in video works, performances, sculptures and paintings. Inspired by Jackson Pollock's way of working, he also sees the essence of art more in its creation process than in the end result. Using unconventional techniques and materials, such as bodily fluids, food and his electronically controlled animatronics, which evoke associations with the figures in amusement parks and fairgrounds and at the same time utilise the Uncanny Valley effect that is frequently used in McCarthy's work, he breaks with the limitations of conventional media.

Expo2000

At 'Expo 2000', where Kasper König and Wilfried Dickhoff act as curators, McCarthy uses chocolate as a carrier medium. The artist presents a walk-in Pinocchio sculpture, inside which visitors can purchase the 'Nose Bars', cylindrical chocolates produced on site, as an allusion to the famous nose of the wooden liar (see Fig. 1). Undermining the viewer's expectations, pushing the audience to the very limits of their fundamental knowledge and softening their perception of reality and fiction, breaking with tradition and social norms and the almost exhibitionist depiction of sexual acts are core themes of his oeuvre.

Processing trauma

'I think my work is about trauma. It is about conditioning. It is about not believing anymore. [...] It is about trauma causing a mistrust what is real,' says McCarthy. The horror scenarios processed in his work are to be seen less as the artistic reflection of personal experiences and more on a collective level, as social, cultural traumas. His condensed and often grotesque works are to be understood as a sharp but always ironic critique of what they depict: Western culture, pornography, art history, mass media, politics, the film industry, consumer addiction and hardened notions of reality.

Spaces of fear in Portikus

This is reflected in his often claustrophobic spatial installations, such as the 'Bunk House' project presented at the Portikus exhibition in 1998. In collaboration with Monika Baer, who has a similar doll-like approach to the depiction of people, he thematises the dark side of the American dream and again takes up the motif of sexual violence. In 2014, McCarthy is once again represented at Portikus and, together with Mike Bouchet, is developing a project that spans the exhibition space and intervenes in Frankfurt's urban space, adding a performative character to the exhibition visit by changing the route that makes it difficult for the public to access the cultural institution.

Sexuality

His humorous approach to sexuality and corporeality is evident in the present work 'Untitled' from 1999. The human body is sketchily modified by adding balloons, which are mainly attached to the mouth and pubic area. Similar to a medical diagram, McCarthy has listed and labelled the individual components of his almost surgically depicted intervention, in which the body parts to be replaced, such as the genitals, the balloons used as spare parts and the tools required (an implied knife and a kind of scraper), are placed next to each other. Sexuality is depicted here, as in many of his works, as something humorous, playful and changeable.

Estimate: 5.000 € - 7.000 €

