

Locks Gallery is pleased to present *Catch as Catch Can*, a group exhibition curated by Fionn Meade. The exhibition will be on view February 13 through March 30, 2013. There will be a reception for the artists on Wednesday, February 13, 2013 from 5:30–7:30 pm.

Viola Yeşiltaç will perform her piece *Taking a Stroll with the Lift Operator* in collaboration with Oliver Input, at 6:30 pm on Wednesday, February 13th. It will be followed by a walk-through with Fionn Meade and the artists. (Follow this link to listen to the audio recording of the performance.)

Artists in the exhibition include: Will Benedict, Kerstin Brätsch, Tom Burr, Michaela Eichwald, Nicole Eisenman, Jutta Koether, Nick Mauss, Francis Picabia, Shahryar Nashat, Lucy Skaer, Kianja Strobert, and Viola Yeşiltaç.

*Catch As Catch Can* inhabits a gap between parody and seriousness, consorting and mingling with sculpture, film, graphic design, and poetry, but always with a wry yet beholden eye towards painting and its terms and limits. Taken from the nickname for wrestling match entertainments of the early 20th century, *Catch As Catch Can* embraces a "no-holds-barred" attitude of reinventing genre, medium, and persona via available means.

Inspired by the presence of Francis Picabia's painting of the same name—*Catch As Catch Can*, 1913—the exhibition engages a prying apart and emptying out of stylistic investments, critical prompts, and polemical stances in order that these tactics be revitalized with a restless comic gravitas. Painting as a genre and idea of mobility and mimesis—moving readily between graphic optical forms, versioning of the artistic self, and gestural pose—is explored in contemporary artistic practices that embrace a spirit of rupture, allowance, and divided attentions.

Made just after the succès de scandale of the Armory Show, which opened in New York, February 17th, 1913, Picabia's *Catch As Catch Can* is an emblem of divided desire, existing between the lyrical embrace of Orphism's colorful abstraction and the diagrammatic noise of the mecanomorphs, disassembled figuration, and embedded commentary that were to ensue. Conflating the artist's memory of a dancer's risqué routine aboard a transatlantic voyage with a no-holds-barred wrestling match Picabia viewed with his friend Apollinaire and first wife, Gabrielle, *Catch As Catch Can* insists and interprets simultaneously, offering up a critique of its own seductive advances. Mixing up the French words étoile (star) and danse (dance) in the lower right hand corner, the painting deflates yet asserts its own rhythmic abstraction, and brings together the filmic collapse of two indelible memories.

From the Keatonesque pratfalls of Sharyar Nashat's film *Modern Body Comedy*, 2006, to Lucy Skaer's filmic portrayal of an encounter with the elderly Surrealist painter Leonora Carrington, *Leonora (The Joker)*, 2006, the language of cinema as the least faithful art form recurs here in the exhibition in the cinematic ability to frame and repeat heightened moments, inverting dramatic tension and revealing illusion and viewer expectations. As with the two rows of movie seats facing each other in Tom Burr's *An Orange Echo*, 2012, the mirror of cinema inverts, fragments, and upends our memory through impossible repetitions, forever altering the imprint of the constructed, painted encounter along the way.

A similarly uneasy, dismantled approach to portraiture and interiority is animated in the work of Jutta Koether, Nick Mauss, and Will Benedict, as they hold equally to the effects of advanced abstraction and décor while taking apart art historical context and social behavior. While the line and language of satire embedded in the work of Viola Yeşiltaç and Nicole Eisenman puts forth an unresolved dialog between caricature and lyricism, Kerstin Brätsch's optical distortion and rotating display tactics resonate with Kianja Strobert's staccato substitutions and Michaela Eichwald's writhing and recalcitrant compositions to further rouse the spirit of distribution, mutation, and mischief carried forth within the exhibition.

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