

The Renaissance Society presents *Secrets of a Trumpet*, Peter Wächtler's first solo museum exhibition in the United States. The Brussels-based artist is producing a new body of work, including watercolors, wooden constructions, and large-scale bronze figures.

A lounging bronze crocodile, an oversized leather bandage, an animated rat singing Bruce Springsteen: Peter Wächtler's practice oscillates between the prosaic and the outlandish. The artist's fascination with pop culture—"I am attracted to bestsellers, page-turners, tearjerkers, blockbusters," he has written—is grounded in his attention to the casual failings of everyday life. His works are neither ironic nor sentimental: though composed of familiar elements and executed in earnest, they acknowledge a limit to their ability to communicate, often to comedic effect.

Wächtler is a prodigious writer, and these texts inform the rest of his practice, which also includes drawings, sculptures, and film. The tales he spins—whether embodied in an object or relayed in prose or moving image—feature protagonists mired in various degrees of disquiet, melancholy, and ineptitude. Repetition is a key element, representing ongoing attempts by the characters, narrator, or even the artist himself to overcome the gap between intention and affect. The sympathy of the artist for his subjects and their travails is underscored by a homespun, heartfelt aesthetic.

Peter Wächtler (1979) has recently had solo exhibitions at Reena Spaulings, New York (2014), Westfälischer Kunstverein, Munster (2014), and dépendance, Brussels (2013). His work has been featured in numerous international group exhibitions, including *2015 Triennial: Surround Audience* at the New Museum, New York (2015), the Liverpool Biennial (2014), La Biennale de Lyon 2013, and *Pride Goes Before a Fall – Beware of a Holy Whore* at Artists Space, New York (2013). A book of his texts, *Come On*, was published in 2013 by Sternberg Press.

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