

Mark Manders

6 June – 12 July 2025

Bury Street, SW1

Modern Art is pleased to present Mark Manders' first solo exhibition with the gallery since announcing his representation.

The exhibition is a continuation of Mark Manders' ongoing project *Self-Portrait as a Building*, a project he began in 1986 by creating a hypothetical floor plan using small objects, such as pencils, rulers, and pieces of wood. Gradually expanding in both scale and scope, to-date, iterations of the project have materialised in sculpture, installation, painting, drawing, writing, and publishing. For this exhibition, Manders has chosen to exhibit sculptures, paintings, and a mixed-media installation.

His sculptural works frequently portray anonymous figures, cast in bronze, though with the outward appearance and texture of dried or wet clay. One such example is a bronze edition of *Ramble Room Chair* (2010–2025), installed in the ground-floor gallery. The sculpture comprises a clay-like figure resting on a domestic chair. Possessing no arms or lower torso – a wooden plank holds the body like proxy legs – the sculpture seems vulnerable and dependent, yet at the same time peaceful, serene and totally at ease. Upon closer inspection, the figure does not directly touch the painted bronze chair but instead rests on a stack of newspapers. These are not ordinary newspapers, which would be tied to a specific date and place, but the artist's own Notional Newspapers, created over nearly twenty years and containing every word in the English language. On the other side of the room, the same newspapers appear in *Perspective Study* (2005–2024), where two stretched newspaper pages are separated by a fluorescent tube.

Manders' fascination with language and his ability to weave together seemingly arbitrary vocabulary ultimately come to life in the downstairs installation *Small Room with Three Dead Birds and Falling Dictionary* (2020–2025). On the wall hangs a painting depicting a dictionary suspended mid-fall, while a stretched canvas covers the floor, concealing three taxidermy birds in unknown locations beneath it. The awareness of their presence creates a psychological tension, making the viewer acutely conscious of each step. For Manders, the floor functions like a painting, but also like precarious earth. Like words in a sentence, Manders' sculptures and installations can be reordered infinitely, where objects and forms create new meaning and interpretations each time. Avoiding fixed interpretation while building a world of multiple propositions.

Mark Manders was born in 1968 in Volkel, Netherlands, and currently lives and works in Ronse, Belgium. His work has been the subject of recent exhibitions at Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2024); Woning Van Wassenhove, Ghent (2023); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (2021); 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art Kanazawa (2020); Bonnefanten, Maastricht (2020); Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Santiago de Compostela (2014); Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia (2014); De Vleeshal, Middelburg (2014); Carré d'Art – Musée d'art contemporain, Nîmes (2012); IMMA, Dublin (2005); The Art Institute, Chicago (2003); Renaissance Society, Chicago (2003); Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2003); amongst others. His solo show 'Parallel Occurrences / Documented Assignments' travelled from the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles (2010) to Aspen Art Museum (2011); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2011); and Dallas Museum of Art (2012). 'The Absence of Mark Manders' toured from Kunstverein Hannover (2007) to Kunsthall Bergen (2008); S.M.A.K. in Ghent (2008) and Kunsthau Zürich (2009).

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