

We have the pleasure to present new works by the American artist Rita McBride (*1960, Des Moines). Rita McBride lives in Los Angeles and Germany where she is the Rector at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. McBride has completed four large permanent public works, including Mae West, a 170-foot high, 57-ton rotational parabola. Installed on the Effnerplatz in Munich, Mae West is one of the world's largest sculptures and the first to be built of carbon fiber.

Since the end of the 1980s, McBride's multi-faceted work has been the subject of numerous solo museum exhibitions, the most recent of which were held at Museo Tamayo, Mexico City and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego. The Kestnervesellschaft in Hanover and the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf collaborated on a comprehensive solo exhibition and publication that is currently being shown at Kunsthalle Düsseldorf until June 26, 2016. Mai 36 Galerie has been hosting solo exhibitions by Rita McBride since 1999.

In her exhibition at Mai 36 Galerie entitled 'Clavis' Rita McBride presents a series of cast bronze sculptures inspired by the shapes and symbolism of ancient Roman Keys. The Romans built the first metal locks and forged the first bronze keys. Their religious beliefs encompassed everything. They had gods to help and support every task. The gates, locks and keys of Rome were protected by the two-faced god Janus. For the Romans Janus was the God of beginnings, transitions, time, doorways, passages, and endings. He presided over the beginning and ending of conflicts, over war and peace. His two faces meant that he watched entrances as well as exits, and saw into the internal as well as the external world, left and right, above and below, before and after, for and against. McBride's Sculptures embody this powerful two-sided experience. They are works about transitions, journeys and exchange. Both physically and magically, McBride's 'Clavis' seem to both unlock and lock things at the same time. Like being on both sides of an argument simultaneously. We turn the key in the lock one way to deprive someone of their liberty and turn it the other way to set them free.

McBride's sculptures are investigations into the duality that is at the core of every proposition, of every ethical and aesthetic problem.

In many ancient depictions Janus is shown holding two keys, one key is gold the other silver. These are the keys to paradise, the silver for the terrestrial paradise, and gold for the celestial. In a similar way McBride's sculptural forms suggest they can open a path for our desire. The molten bronze defined by the precise shape of a key which might open any number of possible dreams. The 'Clavis Aurea' of ancient myth, the golden key to discovering the hidden and mysterious meaning of life.

Mai 36 Galerie

Victor Gisler

April 2016

(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)