

GLADSTONE GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mirosław Balka

“Und Akupunktur”

515 West 24th Street

April 3 through May 2, 2009

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by Polish artist Mirosław Balka. Having witnessed the aftermath of the Holocaust in his native country, Balka's sculpture contemplates history's intersection with memory and the human body. Combining a minimal rigor with poetic grace, his work memorializes events through symbolic abstraction rather than discrete monument. Balka's craft, imbued with a familial lineage, relies upon the well-worn objects of human use and the traces left by the body, such as the salt from tears and sweat, evoking the burdened emotions that lie beyond the easily parsed dates and facts of the past.

This exhibition combines sculpture and video projection in which commonplace events and materials become powerful emblems of historical significance. The title refers to acupuncture's method of incisive interventions for therapeutic means: moments of pain bring forth healing. In a new video projection, Balka uses his own belt to whip the gallery floor. Showing the work on a bed of salt, he transfers the pain of flagellation onto an abstraction of the human body. In another work, Balka films the smoke from a diesel engine as a driver pushes the gas to the rhythm of a Polish lullaby. The lulling tones, however only produce more smoke and cannot fully soothe the pain inflicted onto the body. These spare structures and abstracted videos, like acupuncture, necessitate healing though not complete physical or psychological solace.

Mirosław Balka was born in 1958 outside Warsaw, where he continues to live and work. He has been the subject of many one-person exhibitions at international venues, including the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; K21, Dusseldorf, Germany; National Museum of Art, Osaka; Museet for Samtidskunst, Oslo; IVAM, Centre Del Carme, Valencia; Tate Gallery, London; Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld; and Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago. He has been included in the 2007 SITE Santa Fe Biennial and the Venice Biennales of 2005, 2003, and 1993 where he represented Poland. His video projections are currently the subject of an exhibition at the University Gallery at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Balka's commission for the Tate's Turbine Hall will open in October.

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10am-6pm
For further information please contact Eric Nylund
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530 West 21st Street
Thomas Hirschhorn February 13 through April 30, 2009

12 Rue du Grand Cerf, Brussels
Matthew Barney March 20 through May 9, 2009