

GLADSTONE GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wangechi Mutu

“Hunt Bury Flee”

515 West 24th Street

October 30 through December 4, 2010

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to announce our first exhibition of work with Kenyan born, New York based artist Wangechi Mutu. Spanning a wide range of media, Mutu employs interventionist methods of collage and assemblage to inventively critique the institutions of power and representation that regulate both the aesthetic and symbolic status of the gendered and racialized body. Mining such diverse sources as fashion magazines, pornography, and documentary photographs, Mutu's striking combination of the surreal, grotesque, and seductive reflects the underlying currents of violence and psycho-sexual tension embedded within the legacy of colonial discourse and the American subconscious at large.

This exhibition will feature new large-scale collage works as well as a series of sculptural figurines, which create a dynamic exchange between image and object. Made from ceramic, these moth-like creatures investigate the links between a collection's indexical condition and the fetishization of its subject. Further exploring the hybridized female forms that populate much of her work, Mutu's variegated surfaces move decisively between dense layers of spliced images, glitter, paint, and beads to the swirling calligraphic markings of snakes and hair that give voice to these dystopic scenes of desire, horror, and excess. Mutu's formal methods of collage and montage allow for a mixing of photographic genres and styles culled from the mass media—a representational strategy that not only resists binary determinations but complicates and disrupts the very terms upon which we read images. Through the often jarring incongruities between her collaged elements, from the performative sexuality of pornographic poses to the ethno-centric bodies captured under the anthropological gaze of National Geographic, Mutu plays with the effects of displacement by constructing images that are always already dysfunctional, disordered and destabilizing. What Mutu brilliantly establishes in her charged environments and fantastical tableau is a framework that challenges the question of difference and its attending modes of address, suggesting that resolving these issues is, to borrow the words of the theorist Barbara Johnson, “always a function of a specific interlocutory situation—and the answers, matters of strategy rather than truth.”

Born in 1972 in Nairobi, Mutu received her MFA from Yale University. Mutu's work has been the subject of solo shows throughout the U.S. and abroad including: Wiels, Brussels; Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin; Art Gallery of Ontario; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and the Miami Art Museum. Her work has also appeared in numerous group shows at institutions including: Gotesborgs Kunsthalle, Sweden; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate Liverpool, UK; and the Studio Museum, New York.

For further information please contact Sascha Crasnow
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Gallery Hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 10am-6pm

530 West 21st Street
Marisa Merz
“Living Sculpture”
October 7 through November 20

12 Rue du Grand Cerf, Brussels
Sarah Lucas
November 18 through December 23

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Friday, 10am-6pm, Sat 12pm-6pm