

GLADSTONE GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Andro Wekua

February 3 through March 11, 2006

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to announce its first exhibition of the work of Andro Wekua. For his solo New York gallery debut, the Georgian-born artist will create a large-scale sculptural installation paired with paintings and works on paper. Currently living and working in Switzerland, his work evokes the displacement of the refugee and internalized angst of those growing up witness to national strife.

Beginning with his personal history, Wekua translated the fragmented abstractions of memory into the narrative cues that inform his work. The pain of war and effects of loss burgeon on the surface of his work as he exorcises the conflicted emotions surrounding his youth in war-torn Georgia. The feeling of dispossession is palpable in every work, giving each the feeling of homemade relics capturing both the sadness and joy he experienced during his childhood.

Within somewhat ominous tableaux of child-like figures lost amongst ceramic landscapes recalling forests and oceans, Wekua's unique vocabulary combines a sweet nostalgia for youth with an almost masochistic relish for history's decay. Based on visions of himself as a child, these doppelgangers harbor a tragic fragility, as they are often blinded or seemingly burned. The fanciful figures of the sculptures reappear in both his paintings and collages in quasi disfigured states. Pointed noses grow from the heads of models from vintage magazines, while figures walk through foreboding yet placeless landscapes. His soulful and enigmatic imagery becomes almost ritualistic in how it recreates an abstracted vision of personal history, national strife, and imagined refuge.

Andro Wekua was born in 1977 in Georgia, and studied visual arts there and in Basel, Switzerland. In 2005, his solo show "That Would Have Been Wonderful" was exhibited at the Neue Kunsthalle in St. Gallen, Switzerland, and was also featured at the Rubell Family Collection in Miami. This summer he will be the subject of an exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Winterthur curated by Dieter Schwartz.

An artist-designed publication will accompany the exhibition.

This exhibition will be held in the upstairs gallery.
Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10am-6pm

For further information please contact Adam Ottavi-Schiesl
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