

Press release, 28 February 2011

## All Cannibals?

May 29 to August 21, 2011

me Collectors Room Berlin  
Auguststraße 68, 10117 Berlin  
Opening hours: Tues.-Sun., noon to 6 p.m.

**me**  
COLLECTORS ROOM  
BERLIN

"We are all cannibals. The simplest way to identify with others is still to eat them."  
Claude Lévi-Strauss, in *La Repubblica*, 1993



Anonymer Fotograf: *Porträt (Der Kannibale Tom)*, ca. 1880  
© Courtesy Sammlung Cayetana & Anthony JP Meyer

Wangechi Mutu: *The Partician New*,  
2004 © Courtesy Galerie Zidoun, Paris



The exhibition **All Cannibals?** at me Collectors Room scrutinizes the topic of cannibalism (anthropophagy) in art. Curator Jeanette Zwingenberger fosters a dialogue between historical works—etchings, paintings, ethnographic photographs, and cult objects—and works from contemporary art. Shown are current works from the mediums of video, installation, photography, sculpture, drawing, and painting that explore the issue of anthropophagy in a mindscape that is often both uncanny and playful at the same time.

The juxtaposition of past and present reveals intersections between metaphorical and literally concrete planes. Various motif-related aspects—like sacrifices, primordial fears, and sensually narrated elements of creepiness—are presented from an art-historical perspective, their many layers illuminated. A total of 100 works, most of which originate from private collections, by 40 international artists are being shown in the exhibition, partly chronologically and partly thematically presented. The arrangement follows headings like *History, Myths & Fairy Tales, Solidarity of the Flesh, Goya and His Successors*, and *Holy and Secular Cults*.

Anthropophagy can be found in the myths of all cultures and ages—with examples ranging from antiquity, the Bible, or folk tales to classicist authors and modern horror movies. The recurring motifs of desire and brutality can likewise be found in modern and contemporary art. The concept for the exhibition emerged from the observation that the theme of consumable flesh seems to be gaining in significance within many current art works. Due to today's clinical distance to one's own body, a need arises to probe that which is hidden inside of us. These contemporary works demonstrate a tendency to represent this consumption in a more radical and direct—but also violent—manner than was the case in works of classic modernism, which often had a playful or ironic note. The Surrealists, for instance, though quite fascinated by cannibalistic delicacies, remained focused on the erotic aspects of cannibalism.

The exhibition fields the question as to whether we as people are not, fundamentally speaking, all potential cannibals. Along this vein, the exploration of cannibalism should always first start with us. The issues manifesting in the artistic representation of cannibalism reference basic problems relating to one's self-perception, to associations with one's own flesh, and also to dealings between people. Thus, the metaphorical consumption is able to encourage the fostering of solidarity with others and to expose victim-perpetrator associations. In art, this bipolarity is shown through the oscillation between desire and violence, eroticism and power.

### **List of Artists**

Makoto Aida, Gilles Barbier, Norbert Bisky, Michaël Borremans, Patty Chang, Jake & Dinos Chapman, Erik Dietman, Wim Delvoye, Marcel Dzama, Renato Garza Cervera, Will Cotton, James Ensor, Camille de Galbert, Francisco de Goya, J. J. Grandville, Pieter Hugo, Melissa Ichiuji, John Isaacs, Oda Jaune, Michel Journiac, Dana Schutz, Sandra Vasquez de la Horra, Adriana Varejão, Saverio Lucariello, Frédérique Loutz, Patrizio Di Massimo, Yasumasa Morimura, Théo Mercier, Philippe Mayaux, Vik Muniz, Wangechi Mutu, Álvaro Oyarzún, Chantalpetit, Giov. Battista Podesta, Odilon Redon, Félicien Rops, Bettina Rheims, Cindy Sherman, Toshio Saeki, Joel-Peter Witkin, Ralf Ziervogel, Jérôme Zonder

The exhibition **All Cannibals?** includes an accompanying program comprised of artist talks as well as film and discussion evenings with philosophers, historians, doctors, and lawyers. A children's program familiarizes participants with fairy-tale characters associated with the exhibition theme.

The exhibition is being held in cooperation with the Paris exhibition venue "la maison rouge." Presented in parallel in the art magazine ART PRESS is a special issue on cannibalism, including interviews with collectors Antoine de Galbert and Thomas Olbricht in French and English.

### **Project-related public relations**

artpress – Ute Weingarten  
Elisabethkirchstr. 15, 10115 Berlin  
Tel. +49 30 21 96 18-43  
artpress@uteweingarten.de  
www.artpress-uteweingarten.de

### **Press contact at me Collectors Room**

Tina Volk  
Auguststraße 68, 10117 Berlin  
Tel. +49 30 86 00 85-114  
Fax +49 30 86 00 85-120  
presse@me-berlin.com

# ARTPRESS

UTE WEINGARTEN