

Olaf Metzel

Opening reception: March 16, 2019, 7 – 9 pm

Exhibition: March 19 – April 13, 2019

For all the dejected and rejected. By that I don't necessarily mean the precariat, but those who are outside of society because they drink, because they have a bad character, because they're ugly, because they screw up, because they won't conform. And also because they have become reactionary!

Anything but politically correct, aggressive, loud, radical, polemical, subversive, and vulgar—Virginie Despentes knows how to irritate. She uses phrases that hurt, without exhausting herself with provocative content. Ruthless social panorama, an aesthetics of violence, or narratives of a special kind: instead of sweeping up the shards, they spread them around.

Feminism is a collective adventure, for women, men and everyone else.

More **King Kong Theorie** (King Kong Theory) than Kate Moss. Feminist pamphlet, essay, and discourse. Twelve years old, and still an appropriate response to current woes. Hard topics, clear sharp edges and sharp cuts—the deconstruction of an uncompromising debate: behaving badly as a sculptural gesture. Widely spread polemical statements and provocative, angry criticism, fanned out between corrugated sheet iron aesthetics and expansive communication in the public space. Forceful attitude and an urban vocabulary are layered to form a rough, fast sound that resonates, blows fuses, and causes sound insulation to flake off. *Farewell, girls, and do it better—* **Noch Fragen?** (any questions?)

Baise-Moi, a *militant vision of an avant-garde feminism*, Despentes' debut novel and radically pessimistic parody of a road movie—one long trip fleeing from becoming sober, and from reality—reproduces broken circumstances and nihilistic icons. To repulse, provoke, shock: systematically exaggerating. Cold, aggressive repulsion against anything that blocks the path. *The collective body works much like an individual body: if the system is neurotic, it will always create self-destructive patterns.* Every attempt to escape causes aggression and violence to grow. Affect incontinence without a future, but with substance. *You know, I simply don't believe in content without form.* Condensed, layered, striking images roughly removed in an internal counter-movement. The visual jargon of a cineastic aesthetics between trash spheres, punk, and (s)exploitation—beyond any fragmenting porn materiality. To wrest herself against every resistance from her situation, muddling through, no longer adapting, hardening herself, defying things, and in the grey intermediate areas braving sorrow. Rough realism, torn open by framing and staged signs, be it the hated bourgeoisie or **Milieufragen** (milieu issues), that *don't give a damn about the system of forced masquerade.* Subversive corporeality resists political correctness, and in so doing it doesn't adhere to an ideology or its critique: *Doesn't the best subversion consist in disfiguring the codes rather than destroying them?* (Roland Barthes) Cold fluorescent light, tiled floor, dirty rims, filthy toilets—informal everyday aesthetics—episodes of

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collective depression in public space. Less readymade than drift through social realities. *The milieus are open to the chaos, which threatens them with exhaustion or intrusion. [...] confronts in this way is chaos, the forces of a raw and untamed matter upon which Forms must be imposed in order to make substances.* (Gilles Deleuze / Félix Guattari) Controversial cross sections—re-appropriation. Deviating from the norm. Anarchistic? Destructive? Dissident? Timeless loops from ever-new perspectives. Whether up or down, inside or outside. *Just look at the visages of your elites*—and then we are expected to say **Danke** (thank you) ...

Galerie Wentrup is pleased to inaugurate its new gallery space in Berlin-Charlottenburg with an exhibition of works by the sculptor Olaf Metzel. The gallery has moved to a listed brick building, constructed in 1928 in the style of New Objectivity; the space was formerly occupied by the post office. The German designer Sebastian Herkner was responsible for the design of the gallery's new space.

Olaf Metzel (born in 1952 in Berlin) lives and works in Munich, Germany. In addition to numerous solo exhibitions both in Germany and abroad, he participated in *documenta 8* and *Skulptur-Projekte Münster* in 1987 and 1997. In 1984 and 1990, he participated in the *Sydney Biennale*, in 1995 and 2015 in the *Istanbul Biennale*, and in 2001 in the *São Paulo Biennale*. In addition, Olaf Metzel has received numerous prizes and awards, for example the Arnold-Bode Preis (Kassel 1994), the Wilhelm-Loth-Preis (Darmstadt 1997), the Lichtwar-Preis (Hamburg 2010), and the Jerg-Ratgeb-Preis (2018). Olaf Metzel's sculptures in public spaces are to be found in Germany, other European countries, and Asia.

Works by Olaf Metzel are in numerous museums and collections, including Museum Ludwig, Cologne; Kunstsammlung NRW, Düsseldorf; Hamburger Kunsthalle; Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; Lenbachhaus, Munich; Neues Museum Nuremberg; Kunsthalle Bremen; Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz (Kupferstichkabinett); Staatsgalerie Stuttgart; Sammlung Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt; Munich Re Art Collection, Munich; ZKM, Karlsruhe; Sammlung Falckenberg, Hamburg; Sammlung René Block, Berlin; Böckmann Collection, Berlin; Sammlung Hollweg, Bremen (all Germany); Collezione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy; Vehbi Koc Foundation, Istanbul, Turkey; and The Margulies Collection, Miami, FL.

ⁱAll quotations, unless otherwise marked, are by Virginie Despentes.