

# Press Release

# Victoria Miro Gallery

## Absent Without Leave

17 February – 17 March 2007

*Private View, Saturday 17 February, 6 – 8pm*

**Dan Colen, Elmgreen & Dragset, Loris Gréaud, Jeppe Hein, Terence Koh, Kris Martin, Roman Ondák, Kirsten Pieroth, Michael Sailstorfer, Systems House, Andro Wekua, Jordan Wolfson, Andreas Zybach**

*Absent Without Leave* examines the ways in which contemporary artists might use elements of performance as a material in the production (or reception) of their work. The diverse practices on display here re-imagine performance and filter it into something 'performative' - expanding gestures, actions, characters, and roles into works which incorporate performance as process.

Conceptual and performance artist Vito Acconci has discussed how, at a certain point in his career in the early seventies, he decided to appear less in his work, so that his presence was more of an absence. *Absent Without Leave* borrows the spirit of Acconci's decision and uses it to platform an investigation of the idea of the 'absentee performer' – an idea in which the 'performer' (the artist) is relocated from a visible presence, to a presence which is recorded in the conceptual fabric of the art works themselves.

The exhibition features works in which: there is potential within an art object for action to happen, which may or may not necessarily occur; there is a live event without a performer; there is a physical trace of an event which in fact never occurred; or there is a possibility to read the environment as something staged, or as a set awaiting a narrative.

*Absent Without Leave* presents works by 13 international artists, with new commissions by Elmgreen & Dragset, Loris Gréaud, Terence Koh, Kris Martin, Kirsten Pieroth, Systems House, Andro Wekua, and Jordan Wolfson; an installation of 40 new paintings by Dan Colen; and projects by Jeppe Hein, Michael Sailstorfer, and Andreas Zybach. A performance orchestrated by Roman Ondák will take place on the evening of the opening.

*Absent Without Leave* has been curated by James Lindon and Erin Manns.

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open Tuesday to Saturday  
10am to 6pm, admission free  
tubes, Old Street and Angel

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## Notes to Editors:

### Dan Colen

Seeing decadence where others see dereliction, Dan Colen's deceptively meticulous and labour-intensive paintings and sculptures glorify youthful detritus, mining the rich visual territory of (sub)urban spaces. Colen was included in the 2006 Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and recently in *Defamation of Character* at P.S.1 / MoMA, New York and the Saatchi Collection's *USA Today* exhibition at The Royal Academy, London.

### Elmgreen & Dragset

Elmgreen & Dragset's cleverly subversive take on contemporary social, institutional and public structures has led to some of the more provocative projects realised in recent years. Most recently featured in London with *The Welfare Show* at the Serpentine Gallery (touring venues Bawag Foundation, Vienna, Bergen Kunsthall and the Powerplant, Toronto), previous solo exhibitions have been presented at Tate Modern, London; the Bohen Foundation, New York; the Sprengel Museum, Hannover; CCA Kitakyushu, Japan; Fondazione Trussardi, Milan; and Portikus, Frankfurt.

### Loris Gréaud

Loris Gréaud's projects are often borne out of his collaborations with scientists, architects, geo-biologists, neurologists and engineers. His installations characteristically subvert the conventions of the contexts in which they emerge, playfully twisting the expectations of his audience. Gréaud has recently exhibited at the Centre Pompidou, Paris and the Swiss Institute in New York. He is to be included in the 2007 Moscow Biennial and has solo shows later in the year at the Palais de Tokyo and the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris.

### Jeppe Hein

In his work, Jeppe Hein prompts viewers' renegotiation of public space, often in relation to perceived expectations of the spaces of art institutions. Hein has exhibited widely, notably at P.S.1 / MoMA, New York; the Centre Pompidou, Paris; and the Sprengel Museum in Hannover. He has a current exhibition at The Curve, Barbican, London; and upcoming exhibitions at The Museum of Modern Art, Honolulu; and Aros Kunstmuseum, Århus, Denmark.

### Terence Koh

Visually indebted to both Baroque and Minimalist traditions, Terence Koh's mostly monochromatic installations are sites of ritual. Frequently incorporating a performance element, Koh's works inhabit an irreverent, earthly sublime and meditate on issues of identity and sexuality. Koh's recent presentations include solo exhibitions at The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York and the Kunsthalle Zurich.

### Kris Martin

Kris Martin's works and interventions are elegant considerations of destruction, beauty, and the passage of time, often involving a subtle sense of drama or theatrical tension. Amongst other venues, his work was presented last year at the 4<sup>th</sup> Berlin Biennial for Contemporary Art; Kunsthau Graz, Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz; and at ZKM, Museum für neue Kunst, Karlsruhe.

### Roman Ondák

Roman Ondák's deftly devised interventions, installations and performances interrogate (often humorously) social norms and codes. He has exhibited recently at Tate Modern, London; CCA, Kitakyushu, Japan; Kunsthau Graz, Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz; the 27<sup>th</sup> Bial of São Paulo, São Paulo; the Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne; and the Ludwig Museum, Cologne.

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### **Kirsten Pieroth**

Acting on everyday objects and situations, Kirsten Pieroth's works trade in perceptions of association, reference, location and convention. Often staging incidents or events, Pieroth re-contextualises the ordinary, opening up possibility for multiple meanings. She has had solo presentations at Cubitt, London; Secession, Vienna; Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver; and Portikus, Frankfurt.

### **Michael Sailstorfer**

Interested in the transformative possibilities of objects and materials, Michael Sailstorfer reconfigures form and meaning in his highly accomplished sculptures and installations. These have involved dismantling and reconstructing glider planes to build a tree house and reconstituting a German police car as a drum set. Sailstorfer has exhibited at the Lenbachhaus, Munich; the Yokohama Triennial, Yokohama; and at ZKM, Museum für neue Kunst, Karlsruhe. Sailstorfer will feature in the upcoming Sharjah and Moscow Biennials.

### **Systems House**

Martin Fletcher working as Systems House plumbs the modular legacy of Minimalism, fusing it with his interest in functional design and production as art process. Systems House will be included in forthcoming exhibitions at Galerie Michael Janssen, Cologne and Cell Project Space, London.

### **Andro Wekua**

Andro Wekua's practice operates a curious theatre in which his paintings, sculptures, installations and films become uncanny actors. Wekua's works have been sited at the Kunstmuseum Winterthur; The Rubell Art Collection, Miami; the Neue Kunst Halle St. Gallen; the Aspen Art Museum; the 4<sup>th</sup> Berlin Biennial of Contemporary Art; and the Centre Pompidou, Paris. He currently has a solo presentation at the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam.

### **Jordan Wolfson**

Jordan Wolfson's works and films are manifest as conceptual gestures and subtle interventions that often belie an elaborate backstory. Last year, Wolfson was featured in the Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and in *Uncertain States of America*, Serpentine Gallery, London (previously presented at Astrup Fearnely Museum, Oslo and Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, New York), and in 2004 had a solo exhibition at Kunsthalle Zurich.

### **Andreas Zybach**

In his work Andreas Zybach engages with the technology of space travel, structural design, and biological processes. Drawing on the storied pasts of such fields of research, Zybach recombines historical theories and popular science into sculptural objects, varyingly casting himself as inventor, engineer, and architect. Zybach has presented work in the 2006 Busan Biennale, Busan; Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao; Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg; and the Kunstverein München.

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