



John Waters

Rear Projection

April 3 – May 2, 2009

Opening reception Thursday, April 2, 2009, 6 – 8 pm

A concurrent exhibition of *Rear Projection* will be on view at Gagosian Gallery, Los Angeles, April 11 – May 23, 2009.

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to announce John Waters's new exhibition of thirty-six photographs and four sculptures, entitled *Rear Projection*.

"Rear Projection" is also a movie term for the process in which a foreground action is combined with a background action filmed earlier to give the impression the actors are in the location for the background scene when they are, in fact, filmed inside a studio. In John Waters's latest works, this artificial and outdated visual effect is embraced, attacked and taken to extremes.

Glorifying the struggle, the humiliation and the wild excitement of a life in show business, Waters uses an insider's bag of film tricks and trade lingo to celebrate the excess of the movie industry. Rewriting and redirecting existing film imagery snapped off the TV screen, these one time classic, respected, even honored movies are now assaulted, elevated, subtitled and startlingly altered into a new kind of equality; a cult film that only needs one viewer – John Waters himself. Child stars are given bad habits, innocent movies are perverted by editing out just a few frames, even traditionally beautiful movie stars are glamorously deformed by suspiciously over-budgeted charity advertising campaigns. The cult of religion and the religion of cult are the same in Waters's world. He sneaks into other movies like a spy to photograph the very details their original directors didn't notice. Waters revels in the terrible frustration of today's film business combined with the hostility outsiders feel towards the contemporary art world and hopes, with this new work, to bring into focus a fresh breed of humor, cheap (but satisfying) sexual thrills, and a shabbily elevated artistic appreciation that must always start from the rear of the line.

Waters's first artwork *Divine in Ecstasy* (1992) immortalized the peak of his favorite muse's rapture. This was followed by many other equally "perfect moments" from his own movies. Since then, he has transposed some of his most provocative themes and motifs concerning race, sex, gender, consumerism, and religion into photographs, montages, and, more recently, sculpture. Editing them from their original context, Waters recombines film stills into "little movies", as he calls his particular form of narrative sequence. Word and image play permeate his work, such as *Ham*, a photograph of a large glazed ham that he imagines hanging on the wall of a game thespian or casting agent; *Catholic Sin* is an illustration from his own childhood catechism book that equated the purity of the soul with fresh milk. Two oversized sculptures – *Rush*, a gigantic "popper" bottle and its spilled contents, and *La Mer*, a huge jar of the costly face cream Crème de la Mer, both of which Waters admits to using -- poke fun at the exaggerated promise and mythic status of recreational drugs and beauty products.

John Waters lives and works in Baltimore. Recent solo exhibitions include *Artistically Incorrect: The Photographs and Sculpture of John Waters* at the Laumeier Sculpture Park in St. Louis, MO, 2008. Waters is currently in the exhibition *REGIFT* at the Swiss Institute, New York, February 18 – April 4, 2009, curated by John Miller, and will be included in the exhibitions *Practice, Practice, Practice*, Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin, TX, curated by Jay Sanders and Mike Smith, May 2 – June 13, 2009; and *The Making of Art*, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt Germany, May 28 – August 30, 2009.

Marianne Boesky Gallery is located at 509 West 24th Street, between 10th and 11th Avenues. Our hours are Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 6pm. For further information or images, please contact Annie Rana at 212.680.9889 or annie@marianneboeskygallery.com.