

ARKEN

PRESS RELEASE

GOSH! Is it Alive?

From 4 February hair-raising, hyperrealistic humanoid sculptures invade ARKEN in a major exhibition under the title *GOSH! Is it Alive?* With technical perfection, disturbances of scale, presence and humour the works raise highly topical issues about what it means to be human right now as robot technology and artificial intelligence gain ground in radical ways.

Hyperrealism is one of the really big tendencies in contemporary art at the moment. ARKEN has gathered some of the biggest names in the genre in *GOSH! Is it Alive?* The exhibition shows works by 31 internationally recognized artists, among others Maurizio Cattelan, Tony Matelli and not least Ron Mueck, who has created one of the exhibition's major works – the five-metre-long sculpture *A Girl* from 2006.

An existential shudder

In the encounter with the exhibition's human sculptures we get close to what seems to be another human being. It is both stimulating and frightening, for the works deal to a great extent with the relationship between life and death, reality and fantasy, human and machine. The exaggerated realism that typifies hyperrealistic sculpture is related to mankind's dream of self-recreation. Humanoid robots, doppelgangers or distorted creatures appear in a wide variety of horror and science-fiction films all the way from the classic about Frankenstein's monster to *Blade Runner*, *Terminator* and most recently the film *Arrival* and the HBO series *Westworld*. The dream – or nightmare – of immortality through the perfect copy can perhaps soon be realized by way of robot technology, genetic engineering, cloning and artificial intelligence.

Hyperrealism highlights

Hyperrealism had its beginnings in the 1960s as a reaction to Abstract Expressionism on an equal footing with phenomena like Pop and Conceptual Art. The idea was to give everyday life and reality – a kind of social realism – a place as artistic expression. Since then several artists have worked with sculptures which to a disconcerting degree look like real people and which are made in materials that complete the illusion. *GOSH! Is it Alive?* offers the opportunity to experience some of hyperrealism's most prominent artists: from Duane Hanson's iconic depictions of the American middle class through Ron Mueck's over- and under-sized wonders to Frank Benson's liberated sci-fi figure. The exhibition has been designed with atmospheric lighting and scenographic surprises and can be experienced at ARKEN from 4 February until 6 August 2017.

Participating artists: Zharko Basheski (MK), Frank Benson (US), Berlinde de Bruyckere (BE), Maurizio Cattelan (IT), Brian Booth Craig (US), John Davies (UK), John DeAndrea (US), Keith Edmier (US), Carole A. Feuerman (US), Daniel Firman (FR), Robert Gober (US), Robert Graham (US), Duane Hanson

(US), Uffe Isolotto (DK), Sam Jinks (AU), Allen Jones (UK), Peter Land (DK), Tony Matelli (US), Paul McCarthy (US), Ron Mueck (AU), Juan Muñoz (ES), Evan Penny (ZA), Patricia Piccinini (AU), Mel Ramos (US), Jamie Salmon (UK), George Segal (US), Marc Sijan (RS), Kurt Trampedach (DK), Anna Uddenberg (SE), Xavier Veilhan (FR) and Erwin Wurm (AT).

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