

KÖNIG LONDON

ANDREAS SCHMITTEN

5 - 29 SEPTEMBER 2018

OPENING: TUESDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2018, 6 - 8 PM

KÖNIG GALERIE is pleased to present London's first solo exhibition with new sculptures and watercolours by the German artist Andreas Schmitten.

Glossy white surfaces and abstract, amorphously rounded shapes characterise the six sculptures produced by Andreas Schmitten in 2018. The sculptures' elegant, self-contained bodies, and their symbolic titles (ie. »The Stranded [Female]«, »At the End of Adolescence« and »Mother«) directly reference Modernism's autonomous sculpture. The title »The Waiting [Female]« is also an exemplary link to modern sculpture, as the original German phrase bears a grammatical construction that was frequently and fondly used by the great sculptors of the 20th Century.

The perfect smoothness of the sculptures' surfaces and their crisp, radiant white, call to mind Marcel Duchamp's »Fountain« – possibly Modernity's most prominent sculptural work. In 1917, it established the readymade and revolutionised the understanding of 20th Century art like no other. In creating the sculptures, Andreas Schmitten revisits Duchamp's seminal work: he has scrutinised its form and function. Instead of dismissing it as a mass-produced sanitary trade item, Schmitten upholds the readymade as an ultimate expression of sculptural art. With this installation, the artist conceptually elevates the dissolution of the boundary between functional object and autonomous sculpture. Presented alongside colourful and cartoon-like watercolours, the six white sculptures stand on individual Corten steel pedestals – together they form an ensemble within the exhibition space.

The curved lines of Schmitten's white sculptures are traceable to »Fountain«; they are associated with forms commonly referred to as female. In art history, this ascription is closely linked to the iconography of Mary, Mother of God, whom Catholic theology repeatedly portrayed as a receiving vessel during the Renaissance and Mannerism periods. All six sculptures by Andreas Schmitten share a formal detail: they have identically curved upper end points. These are based on the drape of a veiled figure of Mary that was found at a small porcelain stoup. Schmitten's work discloses wide fields of association, in which cultural, physical and psychological themes coalesce.

Andreas Schmitten (*1980 in Mönchengladbach, Germany) lives and works in Düsseldorf. Prior to studying Sculpture at the Düsseldorf Art Academy, Schmitten initially obtained a degree in Philosophy and Art History from the Heinrich Heine University. Studying under Georg Herold at the Academy, he received the notable »Meisterschüler« distinction (master student). His most recent

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OPENING HOURS
WED – SAT 11AM – 6PM
OR BY APPOINTMENT

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solo and group exhibitions include: Andreas Schmitten (2018) at the Museum Kurhaus Kleve; The Playground Project Outdoor (2018) at Bundeskunsthalle Bonn; Falkenrot Prize (2017) at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin; and New Acquisitions (2016) at the Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf. His works are represented in numerous international collections, i.a.: the Collection of The Perimeter in London; the Sifang Art Museum in Nanjing, China; in Germany: the Art Collection Deutsche Bundesbank in Frankfurt on the Main; the Olbricht collection in Essen; the Kunstmuseum Bonn; the Tony Cragg Foundation in Wuppertal; in Düsseldorf: the Museum Kunstpalast, the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, and the Philara Collection of Contemporary Art. He received numerous prizes for his work, i.a.: the START Art Prize from Kunstmuseum Bonn in 2012, the Förderpreis of the Sparkassen-Kulturstiftung Rheinland in 2013, and the Falkenrot Prize of the Künstlerhaus Bethanien in 2017.

Text (abbreviated version): Doris Krystof, *Ganz in Weiß*, 2018.

Translation: Katerine Niedinger.