

## GEORG BASELITZ

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### MONUMENTAL SCULPTURES, PAINTINGS

PARIS DEBELLEYME

24 Saturday - 29 Saturday

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*"Folk Thing Zero and Dunklung Nachtung Amung Ding – words juxtaposed, words laden with meaning evoking works from the past, Beckettian words pronounced in an act of recall, an obsessive speculation. A nostalgia in search of vision rather than pretty words or dreams."*<sup>[1]</sup>

Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is pleased to announce an exhibition of Georg Baselitz's recent monumental sculptures, a new series of striking paintings, as well as works on paper in our Drawing Space.

Baselitz's first sculpture, *Modell für eine Skulptur (Model for a Sculpture)* dates from 1979 and was shown at the 1980 Venice Biennale. Thirty years later, the Staatliche Kunsthalle in Baden-Baden paid tribute to the artist's sculptural practice. As with his paintings, his forceful sculptures reject all forms of harmony and symmetry in favor of inventiveness visible through elemental forms and jagged lines.

Both sculptures, *Volk Ding Zero* and *Dunklung Nachtung Amung Ding* remind us of an earlier work from 2003 titled *Meine neue Mütze (My New Cap)*, also monumental in its scale, in which the standing figure is wearing a white cap, blue shorts and chunky black shoes. Whereas this sculpture is toy-like and almost comical, these two new self-portraits adopt a contemplative attitude, imbued with memories of the past. Here again, the white cap is present, this time with the word "Zero" marked on its front, similar to the white fabric baseball cap Georg Baselitz wears while working, but resembling more to a square *pimpf* cap from the war years. Just as the artist begins from zero with every work, he also unearths the past. In his catalogue essay, Darragon explains, "Zero signifies the ability to achieve something by destroying or effacing whatever might stand in its way. Zero also means the German artist he eventually became...*Panadämonium* was a first leap below zero. Since then the artist has proceeded by leaps and bounds, 'The leap forward is also the look back'."<sup>[2]</sup>

In conjunction with these sculptures, we will show six new paintings of inverted nude figures, portrayed headless, painted on a black background with a contrasting palette of pink, orange, blue, green and white. Reminiscent of naked figure studies or evoking the prehistoric headless *Venuses*, these astonishing works continue to vacillate between figuration and abstraction, in the artist's own fleeting and spontaneous style.

Twenty new watercolours will be displayed on the first floor of the gallery. The artist's upside down, orange-eating portraits with the "Zero" cap will be shown alongside portraits of the famous American actress Joan Crawford.<sup>[3]</sup> Other motifs include birds perched on a branch that revisit a 1970s series of works with birds or girls bending down to pick up seeds on the ground.

Georg Baselitz was born Hans-Georg Kern in 1938 in Deutschbaselitz, Saxony. From the beginning, his work has been marked by a visceral reaction to human trauma and tragedy, particularly with relation to German history. Baselitz was also heavily influenced by "Art Brut," by the writings and drawings of Antonin Artaud and by African sculpture.

Georg Baselitz's works have been the subject of numerous, international solo and group exhibitions since the early 1960s. His first major retrospective took place at the Solomon R. Guggenheim in New York in 1995, which went on to the Los Angeles County Museum, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., the Nationalgalerie in Berlin and, in 1996, to the Musée d'art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. A second, significant retrospective took place at the Royal Academy in London in 2007, and two important shows have just taken place on the artist's 50 years of painting and 30 years of sculpting at the Museum Frieder Burda and the Staatliche Kunsthalle in Baden-Baden. He lives and works by the Ammersee lake (Bavaria) and in Imperia on the Italian Riviera.

An exhibition catalogue with a text by Maria de Corral will be published in conjunction with the exhibition.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Eric Darragon, "The Possible Comes in Its Own Time," in exhibition catalogue *Georg Baselitz*, Staatliche Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden, 2010, p. 30.

<sup>[2]</sup> Eric Darragon, "The Possible Comes in Its Own Time," in exhibition catalogue *Georg Baselitz*, Staatliche Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden, 2010, p. 31.

[\[3\]](#) Baselitz refers to James Rosenquist's 1964 painted portrait of the actress with the words "Joan Crawford says" written across the top of the canvas. The painting is in the Museum Ludwig's permanent collection, in Cologne.