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## MARC QUINN

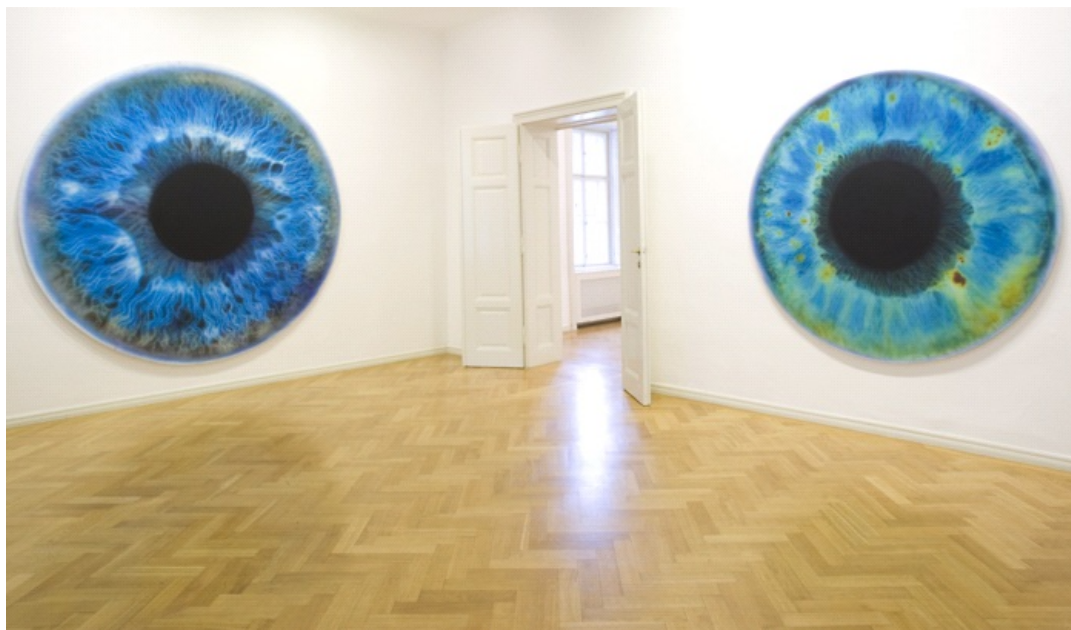
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### MATERIALIZED DEMATERIALIZED NEW SCULPTURES AND PAINTINGS

SALZBURG VILLA KAST

30 Saturday - 11 Saturday

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Marc Quinn (\*1964) is an English artist, whose sculptures and paintings are primarily figurative. Although he has participated in many exhibitions before 1997, it was the legendary exhibition *Sensation* at the Royal Academy of Arts London, which many people remember as their first encounter with the art of Marc Quinn. Unforgettable the work he exhibited: a self-portrait made from several litres of his own blood. The choice of this rather unusual material for art making not only reflects an experimental approach to art, but also emphasises the conceptual nature of his oeuvre.

On May 30th, Quinn will have his first solo show at the Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac in Salzburg. Quinn, who is often grouped with the YBA's – the Young British Artists – will show a substantial body of new works that are shown publicly for the first time. What unites the works in the exhibition is that they all deal with notions of abstractions, in a sense that they contest established conceptions of differences between the virtual and the real.

One of the key works of the exhibition in Salzburg – *Mirage* – is a life-size bronze figure, referencing an image of a prisoner of Abu Ghraib, which went through the media around the globe in 2004. It looks like an image of a veiled Christ, an image of forgiveness as well as a subliminal crucifixion. The fact that the person's head is covered gives it a kind of mystery. Moreover, for Quinn, *Mirage* also references Francisco Goya's *Disasters of War*. "It has all these references, but at the same time, it is a contemporary image. You have a real moment of suffering and suddenly it becomes a two-dimensional image; and then, with the sculpture, it is brought back into three dimensions. This is like turning an image back into an object." Also shown for the first time are a series of *Eye* paintings. Eyes are interesting to Quinn because on the one hand, they are a person's individual feature, just like a fingerprint; and yet, when enlarged, they become completely abstract. "So you have this tension of something so concrete and individual and something completely abstract." A Self-portrait from this group of works will be shown in an exhibition at the Fondation Beyeler during the Art Basel.

Amongst other works, there will be a monumental orchid in bronze from the 'the Evolution of Desire' series and *Twins*, a marble sculpture from the series 'Evolution'. The latter is a group of marble sculptures of a foetus as it develops in the womb. As Jerry Brotton has observed, they bring to mind not only Michelangelo's series of 'Slaves' from the 1520's but also Leonardo's anatomical drawings of fetuses. He explains that "where Michelangelo's 'Slaves' ask such questions as life drains from the body, Quinn asks them at the point of the creation and formation of the body, posing a very basic question about how we define what it means to be human." In an interview with Will Self, Quinn has traced the 'Evolution' works back "to the marble sculptures – like the one of Alison Lapper – and the idea that they're a celebration of a different kind of body shape, while we are obsessed with notions of normalcy." *Twins* developed after, or more precisely out of the series 'Evolution'. Based on scans of scientific models of embryos, this work looks at the moment of creation. It looks into a body where other bodies appear. It's about the mystery of creation.

Next to the above mentioned self-portrait made of his own blood, the marble sculpture of Alison Lapper (2004) is one of Quinn's most well known works, not least because it was exhibited as part of the public art project for the fourth plinth on London's Trafalgar Square. This portrait of a woman, born without legs and very short arms, is part of a series of life-size marble portraits of amputees – people who were born without limbs or who had lost them through accident, war, or illness.

*The Kiss* is also part of this series. Referencing some of the most well known works in Art History – August Rodin's and Gustav Klimt's works with the same title – this sculpture will be another highlight in the Salzburg exhibition. The white marble combined with the fine execution of the sculpture, references idealised representations of the body of ancient Greece. With these aesthetic means, Quinn lets the unusual proportions of sitters' bodies no longer appear as disabilities. Much rather, he challenges established conceptions of beauty and opens up questions such as: what is it that makes an ideal body? To what extent are our conceptions of physical beauty culturally constructed? "In this series of works", Quinn says, "the sitters are heroes who have conquered their own interior worlds, and yet disabled people are invisible culturally, in art history. I wanted to celebrate them and use the medium in its original way as well." In this sense, Quinn's work challenges our conceptions of normalcy as depicted in art history and beyond, and contributes to an ontology of the body.

Ice, glass, marble and lead are some of the materials he uses for his sculptures. Challenging the borders between art and science, Quinn has also experimented with friezing flowers and plants in silicone, so as to preserve their perfect bloom. In reference to *Garden* an installation of such frozen flowers Quinn elucidates, "the plants seem to be in a continuous present but their life is in the past. They have traded biological life for symbolic immortality." Moreover, he has explored the uses of DNA, making portraits by extracting strands of DNA and growing them in a test-tube.

Marc Quinn graduated in Art history at Cambridge University in 1985 and lives in London. He has exhibited in many important group and solo exhibitions internationally including *Sonsbeek '93*, Arnhem (1993), *Give and Take*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London (2001), *Statements 7*, 50th

Venice Biennale (2003) and Gwangju Biennale (2004). Solo exhibitions include Tate Gallery, London (1995), Kunstverein Hannover (1999), Fondazione Prada, Milan (2000), Tate Liverpool (2002), Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2004), Groninger Museum, Groningen (2006) and MACRO, Rome (2006).

Works of Marc Quinn are in many public collections and foundations, among them: Arts Council Collection (London), British Museum (London), Brooklyn Museum of Art (New York), Deutsche Bank (London), Denver Art Museum (Denver), Guggenheim Museum (New York), Goss Michael Foundation (Dallas), Marx Collection (Berlin), Metropolitan Museum (New York), Museum of Modern Art (New York), Centre Pompidou (Paris), Prada Foundation (Milan), Saatchi Gallery (London), Sammlung Essl (Klosterneuburg), Tate Gallery (London).