

PACE LONDON

PRESS RELEASE

Kevin Francis Gray

6 Burlington Gardens, London, W1S 3ET
20 November 2013 – 18 January 2014

Opening: Tuesday, 19 November 2013, 6.30 – 8.30 p.m.



Pace London is pleased to present an exhibition of new works by Kevin Francis Gray from 20 November 2013 to 18 January 2014 at 6 Burlington Gardens.

Kevin Francis Gray's dedication to realism in his work, the meticulous attention to detail in his subject matter, and the use of materials such as bronze and marble may seem conventional to some viewers of contemporary art yet it is precisely this material and visual reference point that remains unconventional. The work aims to transcend the natural and the material in both form and subject matter, seeking to render a physical perfection that is not reached in the temporal world. This tension between the real and unreal lends itself to a worthwhile questioning of contemporary definitions of tradition and innovation.

"This exhibition will mark a distinctive change of visual and sculptural language within my work. I feel that both the work and my studio practice have matured and this exhibition reflects my creative and conceptual ambition, even with the sculptural difficulties it throws up for me as an artist." Kevin Francis Gray, October 2013.

Highlights of the exhibition include five double life size bronze heads. Aligned closely to the traditional art of portraiture, the works transcend the initial confines of the craft and push the contextualisation of portraiture. The heads are hollowed out in order to create the effect of an empty shell, containing inside a polished and idealised world which jars with the brutal and rugged exterior of both the sculpture and the world around it.

Twelve Chambers, 2013, of twelve life-size figure cast in bronze. The nude figures are grouped around one another portraying notions of isolation and inclusion, comfort and discomfort. The subjects of these figures are people taken from the area around his London studio later brought inside and sculpted from life. The piece invites the viewer to walk between the sculpted figures allowing one to participate in the sculpture and experience the figurative presence of the fractured landscape that the sculptures occupy.

Ballerina and Boy, 2013, a life-size sculpture of two shrouded figures made of white statuario carrara marble refers to the funerary tradition of covering the body in Judeo-Christian cultures. The work references a metaphorical veil which allows people to hide beneath. The veiled ballerina carries the limp body of the boy while her taut body struggles to overcome the physical limitations that this imposes in order to appear weightless and reveal the perfection of the craft. This physical contradiction of the Ballerina lifting the Ballerino allows the work to move away from the direct references to dance and more toward the sculptural remit of physical desperation. The slack body of the boy is a reminder that the figure is beyond this world, the details and forms elevating the figure to levels of beauty and gracefulness. The drapery of the shrouded figures both conceal and define the formal elements of the body while also rendering them anonymous and universal, simultaneously tangible within the mundane world and transcendental of the physical.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Kevin Francis Gray (b. in 1972 in Northern Ireland) lives and works in London. He has had solo exhibitions at Haunch of Venison, New York, USA; MendesWood Gallery, Sao Paulo, Brazil, Roebing Hall, New York, USA; One in the Other Gallery, London, UK; Changing Role Gallery, in Rome, Venice and Naples, Italy; Goff+Rosenthal, Berlin, Germany; Osterwalders Art Office, Hamburg, Germany

His work has been included in exhibitions at the Royal Academy, London, UK; Chisenhale Gallery, London, UK; Sudeley Castle, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire, UK; Museum of Contemporary Art of the Valde-Marne, Paris, France; Nieuw Dakota, Amsterdam; Palazzo Arti Napoli, Naples, Italy; Musee d'art Moderne, Saint-Etienne, France, Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade, Serbia; ARTIUM, Centro-Museo Vasco de Arte Contemporáneo, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain; Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel; and Art Space, New York, USA.

Pace

Pace is a leading contemporary art gallery representing many of the most significant international artists and estates of the 20th and 21st centuries. Founded by Arne Glimcher in Boston in 1960 and led by Marc Glimcher, Pace has been a constant, vital force in the art world and has introduced many renowned artists' work to the public for the first time. Pace has mounted more than 700 exhibitions, including scholarly exhibitions that have subsequently travelled to museums, and published nearly 400 exhibition catalogues. Today Pace has seven locations worldwide: four in New York; two in London; and one in Beijing. Pace London inaugurated its flagship gallery at 6 Burlington Gardens with the exhibition *Rothko/Sugimoto: Dark Paintings and Seascapes*, 4 October – 17 November 2012.

Pace London at 6 Burlington Gardens is open to the public from Tuesday to Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. www.pacegallery.com/

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Image: Ballerina and Boy, Kevin Francis Gray, white statuario carrara marble, 2013 © Kevin Francis Gray