

# GALERIE ANDREA CARATSCH

PRESS RELEASE

## McDERMOTT & McGOUGH

7 DECEMBER 2012 – 1 MARCH 2013

From 7 December 2012 until 1 March 2013, the Galerie Andrea Caratsch will be presenting anachronistic photographs, oil paintings and a sculpture from the years 1989 to 2006 by the American artist duo McDermott & McGough. This artistic collaboration began in New York in 1985, whereby they applied the artistic procedure of backward-looking anachronism from the very outset. They specifically glance into the past and consistently apply back-dating of their works. Another trademark is their own method of mixing art and everyday life, making the latter the subject of their works of art. For example, in the 1980s, McDermott & McGough orientated themselves on the ideal of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, both privately and artistically: they wear top hats, detachable collars and live in an historical house only lit with candlelight, so as to relive the authentic mood of the past epoch. Interiors, objects and gentlemen (self-portraits) that appear to have arisen from the Victorian period until the 1930s are the motifs of a series of photographic works of their early phase. McDermott & McGough regard themselves as experimenters of time – as time travellers – and use correspondingly alternative, historical processes such as the technique of cyanotype, gum bichromate, salt prints as well as luxury prints with platinum and palladium for the creation of their photographic works. The title of the painting *I've seen the future and I'm not going* of 2005 is the expression of what the artists want to communicate to the public: "Our purpose is both moral and didactic: to instruct you (...) in the art of living in the past; to ease for you the road that leads us back into history; to encourage you more and more, every day, to make your present the past." The painting shows baroque ornamented lettering of the above picture title, thus directing attention towards the content of the writing. An actual picture of the future is intentionally omitted.

The current exhibition of McDermott & McGough offers insight into several photo series from the late 1980s and early 1990s. Self-portraits and still-life pictures created with cyanotype and gum bichromate are supplemented with salt prints, showing historically important French architectural monuments. Fountains and sculptures in public spaces are used by McDermott & McGough as constructional representatives of the past. In the large and small-format oil paintings of the years from 1990 until 2006, one finds the influences of pop-art, romance comics, movies, film stills and advertising of the 1940s to the 1960s. Female and male comic heroes, firearms, advertising posters, lettering, homoerotic motifs, flower and plant formations and an ironing dandy adorn the canvas in colourful mixtures in the manner of pop-art. Other subjects that run

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through the work of McDermott & McGough like a red thread include closeness to nature and animal protection. The oil painting *Seventy Million Dead Animals*, for example, shows a pair of leather men's shoes for 4.00 dollars! *The Cross*, on the other hand, forms the climax of the anachronistic game of this artistic pair: 15 selected icons of art history of the past eight centuries are shown on a cross of Jesus turned 90 degrees to the right.

The art works of McDermott & McGough demonstrate, through all their phases, their occupation with a past historical period, by means of the representation of architectural monuments typical of the period, interiors, comics, film stills, icons of the visual arts, etc. and by means of anachronism as well as within the medium of photography with the intentional application of historical photographic procedures. This specific turning towards the past and/or elimination of the present and future by means of motifs, artistic procedures and the mixing of everyday personal life and art is an artistic concept and consistent within itself. It is presented seriously, provocatively and humorously all at once and is to be interpreted as a counter-movement to the scientific belief in progress and the confrontation with science fiction: "I've seen the future and I'm not going".

The artists today live in New York and Dublin.

The gallery is open from Monday through Friday from 10:00 AM until 6:00 PM.