

David Altmejd

Le guide

23 April – 29 May 2010

Xavier Hufkens is pleased to announce the exhibition *Le guide* of David Altmejd. The artist is showing colourful, ethereal sculptures that are covered by and mounted in boxes of plexiglass. The sculptures come across as transient apparitions but, when you look closer, materialise as solid, organic structures. *Le guide* is the second exhibition of Altmejd at the gallery.

David Altmejd is known for his large humanoid figures, fashioned from plasticine or mirrors. But until a few years ago he made complex display cases of platform-style structures in which he arranged strange, seductive and grotesque objects, for example pieces of crystal and fantasy jewellery and sculpted werewolf parts. He tied these objects together with a fine golden chain, creating something like a nervous system, so that the whole sculpture looked like a living organism with energy pulsing through it. The resulting structures of plexiglass looked like abstract drawings, floating in space.

The new group of works at Xavier Hufkens form a return to this earlier work. Altmejd has woven various materials through the boxes of plexiglass to create complicated and organic volumes. The shapes, which seem to dissolve or float in space, can one moment be suddenly abstract and the next moment reminiscent of living beings. *Le guide* presents an ephemeral, swanlike figure that appears to be continuously transforming or growing. The artist was inspired for this exhibition by notions of architecture, movement and light. At the same time his visual language is, as ever, based in biology, in particular that of the human body.

These diverse perspectives lead to sculptures that incorporate two extreme aspects. From a distance they seem to transcend the physical but observing them up close they are actually extremely material. These ephemeral, organic images embody ideas of transformation and development and simulate a manifestation of energy via the physical aspects of the materials.

Recent solo exhibitions of David Altmejd (Canada, 1974) took place in Le Magasin Centre National d'Art Contemporain in Grenoble and in the Fundacion La Caixa Museum in Barcelona. In 2007 he had a solo exhibition in the Canadian pavilion during the Biennial of Venice. Last year he participated in the group exhibitions *Collection: MOCA's first 30 years* in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles (2009) and in *Between Spaces* in the P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in New York. In 2010 the work of Altmejd is being included in the exhibition *Skin Fruit: Selections from the Dakis Joannou Collection*, curated by Jeff Koons, in the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York and in *Contemplating the Void* in the Guggenheim Museum in New York. The artist lives and works in New York, USA.

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