

BANNERS OF PERSUASION

PRESS RELEASE

DEMONS, YARNS & TALES

14 Tapestries by contemporary artists

10 - 22 November 2008

The Dairy, 7 Wakefield Street, London WC1

Kara Walker, Grayson Perry, Beatriz Milhazes and Fred Tomaselli are among fifteen internationally renowned artists who explore a medium foreign to their usual practise, experimenting within the lost world of wall-hanging tapestry for the exhibition, 'Demons, Yarns & Tales', at The Dairy in Bloomsbury from 10 November.

Three years in the making, the fourteen tapestries in 'Demons, Tales & Yarns' address subjects that range from fictive landscapes and architectural abstraction to fashion and flora while considering the politics of race, gender, international conflict and the environment.

Adjusting to the new medium while adapting to unfamiliar textures and surfaces, each artist has found ways to expand their practice and develop the ongoing themes in their work. 'Demons, Yarns & Tales' sees them translate familiar languages of paint, paper, pencil, ink on canvas, ceramics or wood panel into that of hand woven stitch and silk thread.

The artists are Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh, avaf, Peter Blake, Jaime Gili, Gary Hume, Francesca Lowe, Beatriz Milhazes, Paul Noble, Grayson Perry, Shahzia Sikander, Fred Tomaselli, Gavin Turk, Julie Verhoeven and Kara Walker.

Kara Walker's *A warm summer evening in 1863* uses an image, captioned 'The Destruction of the Coloured Orphan Asylum on 5th Avenue', that was published in *Harpers Pictorial History of the Civil War* in the years immediately following the end of the American Civil War in 1865. In the work a black silhouette of a lynched female figure hangs in front of this historical scene of racially motivated violence.

Grayson Perry invites us to *Vote Alan Measles for God* in a tapestry littered with images that we associate with the perceived threat of global terrorism – Osama bin Laden, the Twin Towers and guarded oil fields – following the historical tradition of using the medium to tell stories of power struggles and war; a Bayeux tapestry for modern times.

The opening flower petals of **Beatriz Milhazes' Carioca** suggest the movement of a kaleidoscope or the random cycle of a computer screensaver. Similarly the architectural shards of colour in **Jaime Gili's Zelada** suggest unusual rock formations or exploding icicles.

In *After Migrant Fruit Thugs*, **Fred Tomaselli** maintains the hallucinatory visions that radiate from his previous wood panel works while trading his frequent use of unorthodox materials for silk and gold threads which make-up his two luxurious birds of paradise set against a fantastical nocturnal backdrop.

Paul Noble transfers the draughtsmanship and humour of his meticulous graphite drawings of the fictional city, Nobson Newtown, to an aerial view of *villa joe* formed of intricate woven stitches.

Gavin Turk has created a world map of wasted nations from crumpled and discarded crisp bags, cigarette packs and drink cans for *Mappa Del Mundo*, a work that comments on unnecessary consumption, by manipulating randomly selected street detritus into a considered and structured composition.

Shahzia Sikander's work continues her ongoing interest in craft traditions. This journey began with the Calico Museum of Textiles in Ahmedabad, where she began to understand the relevance of textiles to the political and economic histories of the Subcontinent. In *Pathology of Suspension*, contemporary Indian headpieces cascade over traditional floral patterns.

Francesca Lowe's *Trump* uses figurative elements to form a limbo land of spiritual ghosts.

Julie Verhoeven's *Far from The Maddening Crowd* features stylised waifs and fashion-types combined with Disney-esque woodland animals. Anonymous artists' collective, **avaf**, create a carnival collage in *aaxé vatapá alegria feijão* combining a visual mix of totemic heads with candy-kitsch objects.

Gary Hume's use of household paint is softened by its translation into fabric for *Georgie and Orchids*, a personal homage to his wife in which she appears veiled in flowers. **Ghada Amer and Reza Farkhondeh** explore the gulf between idealised art historical representations of the female nude and women as human beings with sexualities and eroticisms of their own. *The Bugs and the Lovers* shows a naked woman and her lover on a background of roses and insects.

Peter Blake's *Alphabet* takes a topographical approach to the use of the medium, reproducing the entire alphabet in styles reminiscent of early printing presses, referencing shifting technologies and modes of communication from image to text.

Within the exhibition, tapestry, a medium with a complex and well-documented past, is reconsidered as a workable material for contemporary art.

'Demons, Yarns & Tales' is the first exhibition to be presented by new visual arts commissioning organisation, Banners of Persuasion, established by Christopher and Suzanne Sharp. The exhibition tours to **Miami Design** from 3 to 6 December to coincide with Art Miami Basel later this year.

The exhibition takes place in the building of what was, until two years ago, Express Dairies' London milk depot. Now for the first time its expansive warehouse and garage spaces will be open to the public as a gallery.

PRESS INFORMATION AND IMAGES

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VISITOR INFORMATION

Address: The Dairy, 7 Wakefield Street (off Handel Street), London WC1

Nearest tube: Russell Square (5 minutes walk)

Telephone: 020 7243 7345

Website: bannersofpersuasion.com

Open everyday: 10 - 22 November 2008

Opening hours: Monday - Friday: 11am - 6pm. Weekends: 12 - 6pm

Free entrance

NOTES TO EDITORS

- Artists and works in 'Demons, Yarns & Tales'**
avaf, aaxé vatapá alegria feijão, 2008, 3.5 x 2.05m
Ghada Amer & Reza Farkhondeh, The Bugs And The Lovers, 2008, 1.54 x 2.32m
Peter Blake, Alphabet, 2008, 1.8 x 1.8m
Jaime Gili, Zelada, 2008, 2.5 x 2.14m
Gary Hume, Georgie and Orchids, 2008, 2.5 x 2m
Francesca Lowe, Trump, 2008, 2.5m x 2m
Beatriz Milhazes, Carioca, 2008, 2 x 2m
Paul Noble, villa joe, 2008, 4.48 x 4.56m
Grayson Perry, Vote Alan Measles for God, 2008, 2.5m x 2m
Shahzia Sikander, Pathology of Suspension, 2008, 2.7 x 1.86m
Fred Tomaselli, After Migrant Fruit Thugs, 2008, 2.5m x 1.6m
Gavin Turk, Mappa Del Mundo, 2008, 2 x 3.13m
Julie Verhoeven, Far from The Maddening Crowd, 2008, 2.75 x 2.05m
Kara Walker, A Warm Summer Evening In 1863, 2008, 1.68 x 2.5m
- The exhibition is staged with thanks to Riflemaker, Paul Stolper, Victoria Miro, White Cube and Sikemma Jenkins and Gagolian Gallery.
- 'Demons, Yarns & Tales: 14 Tapestries by Contemporary Artists' will travel to **Miami Design** from 3 to 6 December 2008 (Preview: 2 December). Miami Design/The Loft, 3627 NE 1st Court, Miami, Florida 33137