



BABE I'M ON FIRE FABIEN VERSCHAERE

SEPTEMBER 7 – OCTOBER 8, 2007

GALLERY HOURS: FRI TO MON 1 TO 7 PM

OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 7, 6 TO 9 PM

Parker's Box is delighted to present **BABE I'M ON FIRE**, a solo exhibition by Fabien Verschaere.

It might be easy to imagine a degree of conservatism and/or naivety in the work of an artist whose preferred materials are watercolor and marker pens, with occasional forays into ceramics, for example. But if Fabien Verschaere's choice of medium effectively comes from his desire for an aspect of childlike wonder in his work, this stems rather from his knowing fascination with innocence and its ability to be a vehicle for the wildest, most non-conservative fantasies imaginable.

Often hailed as a modern day Toulouse Lautrec (Verschaere already turned down one invitation to play the film role), the artist frequently portrays himself as participant/perpetrator/bystander in ambiguous rituals and actions – most often seeming like the inexplicable stuff of childhood (or adolescent) nightmares. Like Lautrec, Verschaere seems always able to have himself tarred with the brush of innocence, however far he may seem to venture into the lairs of Boschian perversity, and however active his self-portrayed character may be in the often dubious activities depicted. In the work of Hieronymus Bosch there was always a question of penance, retribution or purging, but Verschaere has no use for such niceties, stating: "There is nothing literal in my work, no target, no precise message- it's just a proposition about existence"...

However, with the artist famously a regular visitor to a number of often squalid inspirational haunts- (the underworld of Kinshasa being a recurrent favorite) he makes little effort to deny suggestions that his work is indeed partly autobiographical. Self-portraits figure constantly among the characters peopling Verschaere's work where animals and human figures in a multitude of disguises and costumes encounter each other in ambiguous atemporal situations and confrontations. With representations of the artist variously making him into a kind of gothic science-fictional postpunk rapstar or a devilish highpriest sexual deviant, the artist's "personal mythology" apparent in his work, easily fuels speculation about his life, while at the same time stimulating strong interest from the highest echelons of curatorial talent. Verschaere's staunchest supporters include Hans Ulrich Obrist, who presented his work at the Paris Museum of Modern Art, and Jérôme Sans who curated solo shows of his work at both the Palais de Tokyo in Paris and this summer at the Baltic Contemporary Art Center in the UK. A major solo show at the Lyon Museum of Contemporary Art also took place this year.

For further information please contact Parker's Box at 718 388 2882 or info@parkersbox.com

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