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Rituals of the Art World

September 10 – October 23, 2011, Opening: Saturday, September 10, 1-6pm

A group exhibition with works by Paulo Bruscky, Merlin Carpenter, Luis Camnitzer, Stephen Kaltenbach, Maria Krajewska with Elka Krajewska, Nils Norman and Barbara Visser

MINI/Goethe-Institut Curatorial Residencies Ludlow 38 is pleased to announce the opening of *Rituals of the Art World*, a group exhibition curated by Tobi Maier. This exhibition assembles work by a group of international artists whose work critically engages with the mechanisms of the art world. The arrival of post-modernism and the steadily advancing importance attributed to the curatorial figure, is connected to an equal rise of systems that regulate the way we operate and present each other's work. From studio visit, gallery tour, visitor's book, exhibition opening, magazine announcement, peer review, lecture performance, panel discussion, collector's dinner to the validation of the artist's signature or the certificate of authenticity and the analysis of the secondary market, art world politics are always part of the game. In a sometimes-playful manner, the works presented here comment on these apparatuses and invite reflection on the particularities of presentation, daily exchange and modes of validation in the contemporary art world.

The issue of authentication is perhaps most apparent in Luis Camnitzer's work, which demonstrates why signatures are important, how we use them, and what they can do. One of his pieces propagates: 'Una firma es accion, dos firmas son transaccion' (one signature is action, two signatures are a transaction). For *Pintura Original* (1973), exhibited here, the artist has divided all the elements that add to the total value of the work.

Stephen Kaltenbach's series of Artforum adverts, which ran from November 1968 through December 1969, reveals the mechanisms of art world penetration with slogans that ranked from *Perpetuate a hoax* (April 1969), *Build a Reputation* (May 1969) to *Become a Legend* (Summer 1969). The series was predated by a graffiti stencil with the wording *Nothing is Revealed* (1968), which is part of a number of works he produced unannounced on the street and that is also exhibited at Ludlow 38.

Maria Krajewska has over the years collaborated with her daughter Elka, her only proxy to the art world. After reading Katarzyna Kobro's biography and visiting the Grey Art Gallery "Geometry of Hope" exhibition in 2007, Maria started to develop a series of sculptures inspired by the constructivist tradition. Continuing this project outside the mainstream discourse and market, the presentation of the work here confronts an emotional and intentional with an academic and intellectual understanding of art.

The figure of the artist and his/her authority as a cultural worker is also questioned in Barbara Visser's *Last Lecture* (2007). In the last episode of a series of lectures that started with *Lecture with Actress* in 1997, followed by *Lecture on Lecture with Actress* (2004) at Münzclub in Berlin, a full circle is made. In this performance, the two previous videos are projected, and the artist, seen only in the form of a silhouette behind the screen, is dubbing the voice of the second actress, who, in her lecture is recalling the first event.

Similar ideas resonate in Paulo Bruscky's photographs, drawings and mail art pieces from the late 1970's. In *What is art? What is it for?* (1978) Bruscky addressed a potential public in front of bookshop Livraria Moderna with the questions such as 'can we learn to understand art?' 'What is the purpose of art and what kind of agency can it carry?'. When posting letters with his own drawings from his peripheral base in an attempt to gain visibility, his action also speaks about marginality and center.

Nils Norman conceived a new work for this exhibition, which humorously highlights some of the contradictions that are rarely addressed in the NY art scene, in the tradition of Philip Guston and Ad Reinhardt.

On the occasion of his invitation to the exhibition Merlin Carpenter has created a new work entitled *Now Wash Your Hands*, 2011.

MINI/Goethe-Institut Curatorial Residencies is supported by MINI and Friends of Goethe.