

# CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN GENÈVE

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PRESS DOSSIER

*Jakub Julian Ziolkowski*

29.05—16.08.2009

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(3<sup>rd</sup> floor)

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Opening on Thursday, May 28, 6–9pm

JAKUB JULIAN ZIOLOWSKI's work, presented for the first time in a Swiss institution, depicts a world rich with details and inhabited by emotions and obsessions. His canvases teem with motifs which generate a feeling of hallucinated multiplication. This Polish artist's imaginative world is bursting with a chain of references – from modern abstraction's geometry to Street Art, to Philip Guston, Hieronimus Bosch and R. Crumb – and is inhabited by emotions and obsessions.

## A CARNIVALESQUE REALISM

If a sense of urgency and vitality dominates JAKUB JULIAN ZIOLOWSKI's work, the latter is not presented in an easily absorbable fashion. ZIOLKOWSKI's configurations are not for those who seek an orderly visual digestion. Quite the contrary, the viewers of his œuvre are likely to be overwhelmed by his sheer productivity, and even more, by the gargantuan iconographic parameters he operates within. ZIOLKOWSKI's practice is akin to a bestiary of life, every emotion is metamorphosed into a memorable form: animal, mineral, vegetable and galactic. The viewers are invited to confront this visual onslaught and make what they may from its sensual and grotesque cacophony.

Yet, to define the artist's work as a pulsating mass of impulsive chaos would mean to ignore the impact of his approach. For in its monumental sense of excess, lies a vision of the world of significance to contemporary cultural thought. His work engages with the dregs of an everyday gross reality and, as with the notion of the carnivalesque, it indicates a desire to de-reify the socio-cultural world; and to liberate the suppressed potentiality that lies within the sensuous, the bodily and the profane.

ZIOLKOWSKI's quirky, scatological materialism is illustrated through myriad guttural images. Digestive organs processing life are depicted in "Oesophagus" (2008). A monstrous heart pulsating is presented in "Magic Hat" (2007). And throughout the artist's œuvre, the recurrent mockery of death is embodied by a host of skeletal figures, as in *Hotel Supernova* (2007) where a top-hatted skeleton regales a small crowd of cockroaches with his violin, whilst another frolics amongst cobwebs with its feet stuck in toilet pans.

## THE BEAUTIFUL AND SICKENING ALTERITY OF LIFE

Without a doubt, ZIOLKOWSKI's practice resolutely challenges the abstractions of idealist thought. In his œuvre we confront an alternative conceptual and sensory regime that privileges the somatic and the everyday, the difference, or alterity, through the bodily intertwining of self and other. For example in "Untitled (Journey)", 2007-2008, the body is presented in a state of extreme; where limbs and organs of different genders jostle for position. Whilst its circular rhythm, and existential nature, might echo Leonardo Da Vinci's "Ecce Homo", the wheel of life ZIOLKOWSKI confronts us with is radically out of control, challenging an orderly vision of the world and humanity's position within it.

At the onset of each work the artist faces a void, the canvas becomes his personal desert against which to catapult the sometimes beautiful, sometimes sickening alterity of life. An artistic practice without final solutions, ZIOLKOWSKI's œuvre affirms the very possibility of cultural difference and upholds a politics of impurity whose implications reach out well beyond the aesthetic realm.

Curator : Katya García-Antón

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND PRESS IMAGES, please contact

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Jakub Julian Ziolkowski is represented by Hauser & Wirth, Zurich

In partnership with : Theillard Traiteur, Le Courrier, Hôtel Beau-Rivage and Pernod Ricard Swiss  
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PARALLEL EXHIBITION: JOSH SMITH 29.05–16.08 2009



« Sans Titre », (2005)



« Œsophagus », (2008)



“Magic Hat”, (2007)



“Magic Hat”, (2007)

Courtesies of the artist and Hauser & Wirth, Zurich



## JAKUB JULIAN ZIOLKOWSKI BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1980, Zamosc/PL

Jan Matejko Academy Of Fine Arts, Faculty for Painting and Drawing, Krakow

Lives and works in Krakow

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)

JAKUB JULIAN ZIOLKOWSKI was recently selected by the New Museum, New York to participate to the exhibition "Younger than Jesus", which will bring together some of the most promising young artists from all around the world.

- 2009 Centre d'art contemporain, Geneva/CH
- 2008 Hauser & Wirth, Zurich/CH
- 2007 F.A.I.T. Gallery, 'Demi Volte', Krakow/PL
- 2006 Hauser & Wirth, London/UK
- 2005 Foksal Gallery Foundation, 'Stuffed knee, limp color', Warsaw/PL  
Galerie Martin Janda, Vienna/AT
- 2004 Pod Schodami Gallery, Academy of Fine Arts, Krakow/PL  
Gallery '1', Lublin/PL  
BWA Gallery Zamosc/PL

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)

- 2008 Cheim & Read, 'I Won't Grow Up', New York NY  
Galerie Dennis Kimmerich, 'psych. Ned Vena, Jonas Wood, Jakub Julian Ziolkowski',  
Düsseldorf/DE  
Office Baroque Gallery, 'Schüttelreime', Antwerp/BE
- 2007 303 Gallery, 'Three for Society', New York NY  
Hauser & Wirth Colnaghi, 'Old School', London/UK [travelled to: Zwirner & Wirth,  
New York NY]  
Thomas Dane Gallery, 'Very Abstract and Hyper Figurative' (cur. Jens Hoffmann),  
London/UK  
Galerie Martin Janda, 'Who remembers where they are from?', Vienna/AT
- 2006 Galerie Patrick Seguin, 'Galerie Patrick Seguin invites HAUSER & WIRTH',  
Paris/FR  
Bielefelder Kunstverein, 'Skulptur, Installation und Malerei aus Polen', Bielefeld/DE  
[travelled to: Kunstverein Nürnberg, Nuremberg/DE]  
Zacheta National Gallery of Art, 'Polish Painting of the 21st Century', Warsaw/PL  
F.A.I.T. Foundation, 'East's Desires', Krakow/PL [travelled to: Outpost Gallery,  
Norwich/UK]  
Zderzak Gallery, 'No Landscapes', Krakow/PL  
Kronika Gallery, 'Sztuka w s uzbie lewakow?', Bytom/PL  
Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle, 'Robert Barta, Ross Chisholm, Mindaugas Lukosaitis,  
Djordje Ozbolt, Jakub Julian Ziolkowski', Munich/DE
- 2005 Galerie Martin Janda, 'Silent Stories', Vienna/AT  
BWA Awangarda, '6th Exhibition of Young Painters, 7th Eugeniusz Geppert  
Competition', Wroclaw/PL
- 2004 Academy of Fine Arts, Warsaw/PL  
Dom Olimpij, Project 'Home Atmosphere', Krakow/PL
- 2003 Academy of Fine Arts, Lodz/PL