

THE PIPER GALLERY

Come Carnival: Unleashed, Entwined and In Play
Markéta Luskačová and Francis West

Friday 3rd May – Friday 7th June 2013

Come Carnival engages Markéta Luskačová's project of immersive photography of Czech Carnival - the ritual, the costumes, its unruly spirit of magic and metamorphosis - with a selection of Francis West's recent charcoal, pencil and pastel drawings which unleash a Pandora's Box of shape-shifting beings and vivid imaginary scenes.

Both artists frequently explore the dynamic creative energy of the carnivalesque, a subversive spirit which generates an unbounded place of transformation and exchange. Yet, this exhibition presents a conversation which resonates between two very different practices; photography and drawing are set free to twist and revolve around each other in suggestive synergy. Every boundary is blurred while uncanny links are formed as masks and costumes, humans, gods and beasts - both demonic and divine, mystical and everyday - come together in a covert choreography.

Despite very different cultural and artistic starting points, there is an intriguing weave of creative perspectives between West and Luskačová. Drawing has always underpinned West's work not just in terms of sketching for painting but as a creative activity in its own right as a site of daring deconstruction. West's recent drawings are free-spirited; myth, dream and memory are all released in an ecstatic carnival dance. Luskačová has always kept alive the sense of chance and potentiality within the image, creating a new celebratory aesthetic spirit. For her, photography, like sketching, is a dynamic and generative process and it is this untamed and performative approach that brings her work close to West's drawings.

Come Carnival presents work of the past decade which shows both artists returning to some of their most profound concerns with a new sense of playful vitality. When it comes to exploring ideas of performativity, West is performative in his process while Luskačová is an insider to the performance of the carnivalesque. Both independently and together, West and Luskačová express an ageless and subversive spirit.