

**Andreas Golder "I Wanna Be Adored"**

January 29 - April 10, 2011

Opening: January 29, 2011; 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.



Andreas Golder  
"Junger Mann, Mitte zwanzig sucht:" 2010 (Young  
Man, Mid-Twenties, seeks:)  
oil on canvas,  
50 x 40 cm ("2009", "2010")

**Eating From Other People's Plates: The Inspired Appetites of Andreas Golder**

by David Spalding, 2011

"I look at hundreds of very different, contrasting images and I pinch details from them," the Anglo-Irish artist Francis Bacon once said when describing his working process, "rather like people who eat from other people's plates." Andreas Golder (b. 1979, Ekaterinenburg, Russia; lives and works in Berlin), the artist-in-residence at Galerie Urs Meile Studio in Beijing during the fall and winter of 2010, is also a man of strong appetites, devouring iconic works of art and appropriating diverse stylistic approaches to fuel his creative output. Like the polyglot who shifts effortlessly between languages in order to select the perfect idiom, Golder's skill affords him the freedom to adapt and combine various painterly genres and techniques with surprising results. Working within and through the history of Western painting, Golder manages to sidestep any hint of stiff self-awareness, instead creating paintings and sculptures that appear both spontaneous and passionately informed.

Taking its title from a popular 1991 single by the British rock band The Stone Roses, I Wanna Be Adored, Golder's solo exhibition at the Beijing branch of Galerie Urs Meile presents a selection of new works produced by the artist during the course of his prolific residency. While the exhibition draws its immediate impact from Golder's sinister mash-ups, his practice cannot be characterized as an exercise in pastiche—an inside joke designed to unravel the narrative of painting's development through arbitrary citation. Instead, Golder has stitched together the mismatched and sometimes maimed parts of painting's conflicted upbringing with a methodical zeal, suturing together the works in his exhibition with great clarity of purpose and thematic unity.

Like Frankenstein's monster, the twisted visages and desperate goddesses that people Golder's exhibition share a common, fatal flaw: they are desperate to be loved.

The dark humor that threads its way through Golder's new works results, in part, from the fact that his subjects attempt to solicit our desire, despite or perhaps because of their utter repulsion. That they want to be wanted with such ardor makes them that much more pathetic. The series of small portraits (to use the artist's turn of phrase) included in the exhibition is exemplary. All hopeful sinew and gristle, Golder's sitters evoke on-line profile pictures posted on the web's creepiest dating site--their jaunty hairdos a misguided attempt at beautification that only salts the wounds. Titles such as *Young Man, Mid-Twenties, seeks:* (all works 2010) suggest an internet hook-up gone terribly wrong, while *Oma kaputt* belies the vagaries of romance after 70. This grotesquerie of headshots combine stylistic ticks of artists ranging from Salvador Dali to Francis Bacon, two of Golder's touchstones, but many of the figures themselves are as cuddly and as cloyingly needy as the revolting, mutant baby in David Lynch's cult classic, *Eraserhead* (1976).

Golder's sculptural works, vividly painted bronze busts that seem to have leapt directly off the canvases and into the gallery (indeed, the artist calls them 3-D paintings), are reminiscent of the half-decayed zombies that shuffle through horror movies. Perched atop plinths at eye-level, the grizzled heads form a rogues gallery receiving line that visitors must traverse as they move between the exhibition's linked spaces. The sculptures transform the show into a fully immersive experience that refuses the viewer any comfortable distance from Golder's creations.

The five large-scale oil paintings on view are all loosely based on canonical works from western art history, such as Titian's *Venus and Adonis* (ca. 1555 - 1560) and Rubens' *The Judgement of Paris* (ca. 1632), their subjects reworked with Golder's typical genre-bending finesse. These paintings refer to Greek myths whose narratives underscore the dangers of longing for the admiration of others. Reiterating the exhibition's theme, these works demonstrate how a clash of competing vanities, fuelled by the desire for adoration, can set a tragedy in motion. Yet while many of the figures in Golder's exhibition appear monstrous, their wish for our affection reflects an enduring condition that we must recognize as entirely human.