

M+B

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AUREL SCHMIDT AND PIERRE MOLINIER

May 3 – June 21, 2014

Opening Reception

Saturday, May 3, 2014 from 6 to 8 pm

M+B is pleased to present an exhibition of Pierre Molinier's photomontages alongside a new series of drawings by Aurel Schmidt. Feelings of obsession, repetition, fetishism, pain, longing, death and the psychedelic tumble throughout the intimate works. The exhibition runs from May 3 through June 21, 2014, with an opening reception on Saturday, May 3 from 6 to 8 pm.

Both Molinier's and Schmidt's work reflect their exquisite craftsmanship, as well as practices that are thoroughly intertwined with their own lives. Precious and personal, the work is exacting, highly detailed and teeming with overt intimacy. Decorative religious and sexual symbols abound throughout the work speaking to memory, fantasy and desire. Fascinating and repulsive, grotesque and refined, the work is meant to both entice and reveal our inner desires.

Anti-bourgeois and anti-religious, Pierre Molinier (1900-1976, Agen, France) studied as a painter, turning to fetishistic eroticism in 1950. Believing the androgynous hermaphrodite to be the ideal, balanced sex, Molinier employed his own body, along with a wide range of specially made props: prosthetic limbs, stiletto heels, elaborate *godemichés* (the French word for dildos), black net stockings, lingerie, masks and the occasional trusted friend in performative acts of transformation. Intended to shock, the resulting photomontages depict intimate portraits of spiritual and erotic rapture that Molinier acted out in the theater of his Bordeaux boudoir. André Breton integrated Molinier into the Surrealist group with an exhibition of his paintings in Paris in 1956. That same year, Molinier began contributing to the magazine *Le surréalisme, même* and started taking his erotic photographs. In 1959, he exhibited at the *Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme* in Paris. Like his father before him, Molinier committed suicide at 76 years of age by a self-inflicted gunshot while masturbating. Considered by some as the "forgotten Surrealist," Molinier is now the subject of over a dozen monographs and exhibition catalogs, and his work has inspired artists since the 1970s, foreseeing the works of Andy Warhol, Vito Acconci, Robert Mapplethorpe, Cindy Sherman and others. Historians are now recognizing him as one of the first performance artists, and his work has recently been included in exhibitions at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), Tate Modern (London), and at the 2013 Venice Biennale, a room was devoted to his work in the main exhibition, *The Encyclopedic Palace*, at the Arsenale curated by Massimiliano Gioni.

Aurel Schmidt's (b. 1982, Kamloops, BC, Canada) intricately detailed drawings are a reflection of our times, their individual parts pulled from the detritus of our lives. There is a longing, tenderness and pleasure inherent in the work, a fetishistic quality highlighted by Schmidt's painstaking craft. Flowers and body parts intertwine in Schmidt's recent drawings. The body parts borrowed from herself or friends—ex's, lovers, crushes. The flowers, sensual and potent, are fertile stand-ins for the human body and mutated desire. Schmidt was included in the 2010 *Whitney Biennial* and has had solo exhibitions at Deitch Projects in New York and Peres Projects in Los Angeles. Notable group exhibitions include those at Saatchi Gallery, London (2013 and 2011); Marianne Boesky Gallery, NY (2011); Garage Center of Contemporary Culture, Moscow (2011); Weatherspoon Art Museum, University of North Carolina (2010); New Jersey Museum of Contemporary Art (2010); Centro d'Arte Contemporanea Palazzo Lucarini Contemporary, Trevi, Italy (2010); Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2009); and Andrea Rosen Gallery, NY (2009). Schmidt is the subject of four monographs, the most recent published in 2011 with Mörel Books. Notable press includes *Art Observed*, *New York Mag*, "30 Under 30 In Art and Design" *Forbes* (2011), *Vogue*, *New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Art Info*, *Interview Magazine* and *Purple Magazine*. Schmidt lives and works in New York.

Location: **M+B**, 612 North Almont Drive, Los Angeles, California 90069
Show Title: Aurel Schmidt and Pierre Molinier
Exhibition Dates: May 3 – June 21, 2014
Artist's Opening Reception: Saturday, May 3, 6 – 8pm
Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm, and by appointment

For press inquiries, please contact Jeanie Choi at **M+B** at (310) 550-0050 or jeanie@mbart.com.
For all other inquiries, contact Shannon Richardson at shannon@mbart.com or Alexandra Wetzel at alexandra@mbart.com.

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