

PEGGY PREHEIM

Facing Time

May 10- June 16, 2007

Opening reception: Thursday May 10, 2007, 6-8pm

Gallery two

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is very pleased to present its ninth solo exhibition with Peggy Preheim. Titled *Facing Time*, the exhibition is comprised of a series of figures, drawn, photographed, sculpted, and staged, that focus on the transience of life, examining the consequences of the passage of time and the cyclical nature of human experience, with powerfully symbolic personal, biblical, and mythological imagery. This presentation, the most in depth to date, includes exquisitely rendered works on paper, sculptures, and photography. Both new and classic, the works are simultaneously accessible yet mysterious, revealing yet elusive, strikingly intimate and yet always universal.

Preheim broadens the scope of her artistic inquiry in *Facing Time*, elaborating on her past exploration of images from childhood to examine different phases in human progression. Although primarily figurative, Preheim's work is simultaneously non-narrative and not exclusively personal; her aim is not to singularly examine her own transformations, but rather to present the major dichotomies that exist in each life: the public and private worlds, the past and the present, the sacred and secular, the conscious and the subconscious. No matter how large her surface, Preheim presents these dichotomies in drawings that are small in scale, and she often shelters her figures within a geometric design, as in "Geiser," "Roots," and "Dormir." The surrounding blankness of the paper and the geometric framework that Preheim gives her figures serve a type of cartographic placement, the eye travels from the blank whiteness of the frame to the shape that surrounds the figure until it lands on the figure itself; this format requires a more active engagement from the viewer, literally drawing them in, and exhorting a close examination.

The compositional complexity and painstaking execution of "Geiser," "Roots," and "Dormir," are representative Preheim's drawing practice. Her elemental materials, pencil and paper, contrast with the detail of her work to emphasize the intricacies and psychological depth of the pieces. Often using antique photographs as source imagery, Preheim culls a figure from the snapshot, and in redrawing it intensifies the level of detail that the photograph is able to convey. Creating a single, unique drawing from a source that could be reproduced infinitely, Preheim reanimates the past moment captured on film, and imbues it with a preciousness and singularity. The contrast between the unique and the reproduced is also present in her drawings on banknotes. Elaborating on her series *Dead Giveaway*, a group of drawings on Francs, done in 2001 at the time of the transition to the Euro, Preheim presents "Scale" an image of a dog, a small, western looking terrier, meticulously drawn opposite the roaring lion on a Burmese Kyat, here Preheim juxtaposes the domestic with the public: a personal pet, versus a national icon, inverting what is deemed conventionally valuable—the unique drawing increasing the worth of the banknote itself.

The theme of the passage of time appears in Preheim's drawings, in the obsolescence of the Franc, and the use of antique photography as figurative subject matter, but is most directly addressed in her sculpture and photography. In the side gallery, "Raising Time," a two-tiered sculpture, housed in an antique vitrine, brings together disparate elements, including a doll enveloped in a delicate hermaphroditic white clay sculpture, and plates of male heads, resting on old fashioned ticking pillows; these components both individually and collectively challenge conventional representations of gender and maternity. Like "Raising Time," the white clay figures that comprise Preheim's sculptures, and that Preheim arranges for her photographs, also reference the maternal, though less explicitly. Seemingly child-like in their delicacy, their smooth white surfaces are unblemished and youthful, yet their arrangement is often atypical and unsettling, creating pieces that are uncanny and enigmatic.

In September of 2008, an in depth survey exhibition of Peggy's work will open at the Aldrich Museum. She is currently included in *New Directions in American Drawing*, The Columbus Museum, Columbus, Georgia; traveling to the Telfair

Museum, Savanna, Georgia, 2007; and Knoxville Museum of Art, Tennessee, 2007-2008. Recent exhibitions include, *Transitional Objects: Contemporary Still Life*, Neuberger Museum, Purchase, New York, 2006 (group); *Does Size Matter?* Northern Clay Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2006 (group); *Past Presence: Childhood and Memory*, Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria, 2005 (group); among others.