

JACK SHAINMAN GALLERY

GEHARD DEMETZ

Introjection

April 27 – June 3, 2017

Opening reception: **Thursday, April 27th**, from **6 – 8 PM** at **524 West 24th Street**.

Jack Shainman Gallery is pleased to announce *Introjection*, a series of new sculptures by **Gehard Demetz**, and his third solo exhibition with the gallery.

The exhibition's title is taken from the psychoanalytic term for when a person unconsciously takes on behaviors or attributes of other people or of the surrounding world. Demetz's precisely handcrafted figures of children stand confidently on plinths—elevated above their natural stature, they confront adults at eye level with an introspective gaze. Rather than being carved from a single large block of wood, the sculptures are assembled from small modular units—mimicking building blocks—with gaps in their structures suggesting both physical loss and a kind of spiritual lack within the soul. This new body of work unites the solemn figures with objects culled from everyday life or religious practice to highlight the psychological undercurrent between an individual and their belongings, and how the external can become internalized as part of the self.

In the titular work (*Introjection*, 2017) a young boy wears a *ghërlanda spiza*, a dome-shaped crown worn by girls as part of the traditional Ladin folk costume in the artist's native region of the Dolomites. The ritual headgear has been re-appropriated and wrapped around the boy's mouth like a muzzle. His arms hang at his sides while another set hover ghost-like, folded across his chest. The effect is haunting and defiant despite the figure's restraints.

The association between subject and object goes still further in *Senza Titolo* (2016), in which a boy is carved from an icon of Christ, fusing their features together. The boundary between the two blurs, as if one is in the process of transforming into the other. The title translates to "untitled" but can also mean "without qualification," conjuring an unbridled devotion that literally and figuratively consumes. Similarly, *Miraculous Breath* (2016) merges a girl with a statue of the Virgin Mary, the child's eyes closed in a state of deep meditation. Although rendered as still figures, the sculptures embody a potent moment of transition, exuding a dynamism all their own.

Gehard Demetz lives and works in Sëlva di Val Gardena in Northern Italy. Currently, his work is on view in a solo exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Rome, June 23 through September 10, 2017. Other solo exhibitions include *Gehard Demetz: Echo Eines Kniefalls* at the Kunstverein Recklinghausen, Germany (2013), and *Mutterland, l'età estranea*, Fondazione Mimmo Rotella, Italy (2011). Selected group exhibitions include *Beyond the Classical: Imagining the Ideal Across Time* at the National Academy Museum, New York (2015) and *Turn the Page: The First Ten Years of Hi-Fructose* at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art (2016). In 2007, Demetz was a recipient of the Richard Agreiter Sculpture Prize.

Concurrently on view at 513 West 20th Street is *Homemaker*, a solo exhibition featuring the work of Becky Suss. Upcoming exhibitions include *The Coffins of Paa Joe and the Pursuit of Happiness* which opens at our 24th Street gallery on June 8th and The School in Kinderhook, New York on June 24th.

Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10am to 6pm. For additional information and photographic material please contact the gallery at info@jackshainman.com.