

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The AUSTRIAN CULTURAL FORUM NY presents

SOLACE

FEB 4 – MAY 15, 2010

This exhibition understands art in a very mundane sense as a source of solace. It is committed to the mildly intoxicating character of beauty and the inebriating quality of alcohol and embraces the baser genres of still life and decoration. The show comprises two perspectives. One addresses the topic of solace in a contemplative movement revolving around objects, video, and painting. The other focuses on the headier consolations of inebriation and intoxication. The exhibition at the Austrian Cultural Forum is supplemented by a series of performances and events taking place in different locations throughout the city, each bringing up a form of solace, be it meditative or delirious.

The complexities of solace are reflected by the diversity of works in the exhibition. Paintings by **Ernst Caramelle**, **Alex Hubbard**, **Ruth Laskey**, **Gerwald Rockenschaub**, and **Rita Vitorelli** reveal the consolatory aspects of the medium of painting itself. **Tom Marioni's** *The Act of Drinking Beer with Friends Is the Highest Form of Art* promises solace through conversations conducted in a serene atmosphere of communal inebriation. **The Bruce High Quality Foundation's** homage to Beethoven and Ayn Rand, titled *Ode to Joy (The Fountainhead)*, and **Peter Coffin's** installation *Untitled (Equilibrium Balloons)* represent more philosophical forms of solace. The latter addresses existential issues like inner balance by means of a deceptively simple visual metaphor.

The solace sought in inebriation and intoxication is explored more directly in the projects and performances that will take place throughout the period of the exhibition, both at the Austrian Cultural Forum and at several off-site venues. Philosophical drinking songs, penned by the early twentieth-century Austrian philosopher and economist **Felix Kaufmann**, will be played during the opening reception. The *Solace* party, hosted by Austria-based art magazine **spike**, will further delve into the intricacies of inebriation. There will be an evening of theory (*In Memory of Painting: Solace*), action (a performance by the New York-based duo **Rancourt/Yatsuk**), and musical entertainment (a concert by the French electronica composer **Koudlam**).

There will also be a poetry reading where actor **Jeff Horn** will read poems on solace selected by artists in the show.

In the first week of March, the members of the **Palm d'Or Social Club** (**Lucas Ajemian, Julien Bismuth, Mike Bouchet, Henrik Capetillo, Sebastian Clough, Christian Jankowski, and Seth Williamson**) will host an evening of entertainment. Last but not least, several artists will lead walks through New York City to the places where they find or found their own unique forms of solace.

Artists: Julien BISMUTH, THE BRUCE HIGH QUALITY FOUNDATION, Ernst CARMELLE, Peter COFFIN, Alex HUBBARD, KOUDLAM, Ruth LASKEY, Lorna MACINTYRE, MAHONY, Tom MARIONI, Sands MURRAY-WASSINK, RANCOURT/YATSUK, Gerwald ROCKENSCHAUB, Martha ROSLER, Misha STROJ, Piotr UKLANSKI, and Rita VITORELLI

Executive Producers and Curators: Severin DÜNSER, Christian KOBALD, Emanuel LAYR, Andreas STADLER, and Rita VITORELLI

Exhibition Coordinator: Natascha BOOJAR

Schedule of Solace Events and Performances:

Wednesday, February 3, ACFNY, from 6 to 8 PM:

Opening reception featuring *Wiener Lieder zu Philosophie und Ökonomie (Viennese Songs on Philosophy and Economy)* by **Felix Kaufmann**. Performed by **Joshua Camp (music & vocals)**.

Official opening by **Rudolf Hundstorfer**, Austrian Minister of Labour and Social Affairs.

Thursday, February 11, SWAT Bar, 59 Canal Street, from 8 PM:

Solace Party hosted by Vienna-based art magazine *spike*, **COCO & Layr Wuestenhagen**

By invitation only

Thursday, February 18, ACF Theater:

6 PM Lecture by **Suzanne Hudson: *In Memory of Painting – Solace***

In Memory of Painting is an on-going project founded by **Rita Vitorelli** and **Emanuel Layr** in January 2009 in Vienna, presenting exhibitions, lectures, performances, texts, and a library. The project revolves around the idea that the "death of painting" created a promising silence from which one could engage with painting anew. *In Memory of Painting* joyfully explores the paths left open by the purported demise of the medium of painting.

Suzanne Hudson is an art historian and a co-founder of the *Contemporary Art Think Tank*. She is a frequent contributor to publications such as *Artforum*, *Parkett*, *Art Journal*, and *October* and recently published the book "Robert Ryman: Used Paint" (MIT Press, 2009)

7:30 PM Performance by **Rancourt/Yatsuk**

By their own account, Justin Rancourt and Chuck Yatsuk are "two young lifestyle artists who orchestrate events and exhibitions centered on American leisure pastimes: mixing drinks, motivational speaking, real estate speculation, multi-level marketing, boating, and vacation planning." For the evening at the Austrian Cultural Forum, Rancourt/Yatsuk are developing a special performance that shares their perspective on **Solace** in the form of a presentation and demonstration.

9 PM Concert by **Kouldam**

"He is young and beautiful, his lips smell the ocean, his eyes are like the eyes of a dolphin. His body is like a modern statue, his music golden ruins and mountain summit visions at night. He believes that poverty in Africa can save the world." That's how Kouldam, French author, composer, singer, and poet, characterizes himself. Influenced by musical styles ranging from classical music to pop and techno, Kouldam creates multifaceted worlds between heroic-romantic pop songs and electronic operas. His concert at the Austrian Cultural Forum theater will speak straight to the heart of our souls.

R.S.V.P. at www.acfny.org (go to Events, click on the day of the event, and click on the reservation button)

Sunday, February 21, 8 PM, 179 Canal (179 Canal Street, 2nd Floor):

La nuit porte conseil: A Poetry Night

Jeff Horn reads poems on solace selected by artists in the exhibition

Friday, March 5, from 8 PM to late at the ACF:

An evening with the Palm d'Or Social Club

Artists **Lucas Ajemian, Julien Bismuth, Mike Bouchet, Sebastian Clough, Christian Jankowski, and Seth Williamson** of the **Palm D'or Social Club** host a cabaret-style evening of layered entertainment; this event will also coincide with the launch of the new 2010 **Palm D'Or** editions catalog.

The **Palm D'Or Social Club** was founded in 2003 in the basement of 45 Canal St. Since then, the **Palm D'Or Social Club** has produced several projects internationally, including the First International Palm D'Or Film Festival at the Berlin Art Fair, and The Pitch, at the 2006 Frankfurt ArtFair.

R.S.V.P. at www.acfny.org (go to Events, click on the day of the event, and click on the reservation button)

Thursday, March 11, 7 PM, ACF Theater:

Screening of videos and films selected and introduced by Andreas Huber

R.S.V.P. at www.acfny.org (go to Events, click on the day of the event, and click on the reservation button)

City Walks | Details to be announced

There's a place, Where I can go, When I feel low, When I feel blu: A selection of artists take participants on guided walks to places where they seek solace.

Limited to 20 persons each City Walk. R.S.V.P. elai@acfny.org

Admission to exhibitions, concerts, and other events at the Austrian Cultural Forum is free.

Address: 11 East 52nd Street, New York, NY 10022, USA

Additional information: 212 319 5300 or www.acfny.org.