

TIP TOLAND

EXHIBITION INFORMATION
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RETURN

March 8 - April 21 2012

NEW YORK – Barry Friedman is pleased to present “Return,” a solo exhibition of figurative sculpture by the contemporary artist Tip Toland. This exhibition, Toland’s first at Barry Friedman, will open with a reception for the artist on Thursday, March 8 from 6-8pm and will be on view through April 21st, 2012.

The characters in Tip Toland’s ceramic sculptures are fragile creatures, at different stages in life. Each figure is at least partly autobiographical, embodying an aspect of Toland that has “inched its way to the foreground of my awareness and is ready to become fleshed out”. Sometimes nude, they are stripped of social context and share a similar vulnerability, isolation, and innocence. They are studies of the human psyche articulated through realistic characters, conveying states of being and common traits of the human condition, some of which the viewer may recognize in himself or herself. Moments of awareness, pleasure, serenity, pain, angst, insecurity, and desire are depicted in a hyper-realistic and surrealistic manner.



Pulse, one the most complex sculptures the artist has ever undertaken, depicts a life-size female nude on a swing in motion. Featured in “Melt”, Toland’s solo exhibition at the Bellevue Arts Museum in 2008, this is the first time this sculpture will be on view in a gallery. Toland considers the swing a metaphor for life. The outstretched woman, her head thrown back in abandon with long black hair cascading to the floor, accepts the tenuous threads from which she hangs and embraces the moment.

In a youth-obsessed society, a sculpture like *Monkey Mind*, the seated figure of an elderly man whose body is aged and wrinkled, may have an unsettling quality for the viewer. Imbued with an inner serenity, his animated and chattering finger puppets appear to amuse, rather than unsettle.

In his catalogue essay for “Melt,” Museum Director of Curatorial Affairs/Artistic Director Stefano Catalani explains, “In the hands of an artist like Toland, there could perhaps be no better medium than clay. Intrinsically fragile, and even more vulnerable during the process of its hardening, in her work it seems to possess an encompassing capacity to reveal the human dimension that takes its fundamental strength from her vision and the authority of her accomplished sculptural practice.” Fellow Curator Nora Atkins writes, “[Toland] explores those on the edge between society and solitude, the more marginalized characters we identify with, as well as the marginalization within ourselves. These sculptures deal directly with the constant conflict between self and society, birth and mortality, innocence and wisdom, as their subjects evolve in time from infancy to old age. [...] Beyond the quest for acceptance in society, the pieces seek an extra-societal acceptance of the self, and examine our perception of the socially sidelined and alienated. With her sculptures grounded in their materiality, yet manifesting the spiritual, Toland continues to offer a poignant lens on the human condition.”

About Tip Toland

Tip Toland was born outside of Philadelphia in 1950 and received an MFA from Montana State University in 1981. She has been the recipient of prestigious awards including a National Endowment for the Arts grant in 1986, and a first-place grant from the Virginia A. Groot Foundation in 2005. Her work is included in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; Museum of Arts and Design, NY; Arizona State University Art Museum; Yellowstone Art Museum, MT; Kohler Arts Center, WI; Archie Bray Foundation, MT, and as well as many private collections. Toland lives in the Seattle area and conducts workshops across the United States.

For visuals and more information, please contact:
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