

# HAUSER & WIRTH

Press Release

## ‘A Modest Proposal’

Hauser & Wirth New York, 18th Street, Showroom

23 June – 29 July 2016

Opening: Thursday 23 June 2016, 6 – 8 pm



**New York...** Beginning 23 June, Hauser & Wirth is pleased to present ‘A Modest Proposal’, featuring work by artists Lucas Blalock, Naotaka Hiro, Sanya Kantarovsky, Nicola L, Tala Madani, and Jakub Julian Ziolkowski – artists who humorously critique our relationship to the bodily and abject. The exhibition takes its title from Jonathan Swift’s satirical essay of 1729, commenting upon the extreme poverty and famine in Ireland. His proposed solution is simple: eat the children.

‘A Modest Proposal’ will be on view in the Showroom at the gallery’s West 18th Street location through 29 July.

In Lucas Blalock’s recent work, the artist uses a large-format camera to create digitally distorted still-lives of mundane household items, flea market finds, and other junk. These images often appear as though someone has just tampered with the composition, creating a palpable sense of interference and a distinct unease to the scene. Through unexpected juxtapositions, Blalock challenges viewers’ tendency to look at an image too quickly.

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Naotaka Hiro's self-casting sculptures begin with a performative act: the artist sculpts his own body, confronting limitations of putting oneself into a plaster mold. Hiro created 'Sixteen Terminals' (2016) by drawing lines of plaster from the top of his head to the end of each appendage. Cast fingers and toes became deformed and fell off in this challenging and lengthy process. The resulting sculpture is an abstract representation, somewhere between the artist's actual form and internal self-image. As Hiro puts it, it's 'me versus me.'



Sanya Kantarovsky's richly colored paintings offer a glimpse into deceptively quotidian scenes of single figures at an uncanny moment. Plucked from a narrative context, his figures are trapped within their frames in atmospheres tense with anticipation. In his largest works on paper to date, Kantarovsky contemplates the everyday confrontation between the self and the external world.

Concerned with body politics and human relationships, Nicola L's Penetrables are canvases that take the form of bodies suspended from the wall like flayed skins. With mouths agape, 'Antarctica Penetrables' (1980) and 'Fire Penetrables' (1980) are manifestations of unease, frustration, and thwarted protest. In another series called Functional Objects, Nicola L offers surreal representations of the human form to humorous and dreamlike effect. These works offer a pointed critique of our relationships to one another. Part of this series is 'Femme Commode White' (1968), a dresser shaped like a woman whose corpus has been broken into drawers with knobs in all the right places.

The self-abasing characters in Tala Madani's paintings confront their bodies and sexuality to create witty and messy – and sometimes-deadly – scenes of self-discovery. In Madani's work, revelations of pleasure are also realizations of mortality. 'The Ritual' (2016), presents Madani's recurring characters Dick and Jane in a signature cinematic style, with red and green deployed to suggest a 3-D effect. The viewer witnesses a deadly shift in power between these two characters: smears of paint on canvas suggest the shapes of bodies in the repetition of a cycle, a closed loop from which there is no exit.

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Jakub Julian Ziolkowski paints hallucinatory scenes that are simultaneously fantastical and terrifying. In his lurid and meticulously painted images, surreal bodily forms reveal primitive interests and impulses. In 'Untitled' (2015), the bodies of two faceless figures morph into a landscape that stretches from the glimmering heavens to the depths of hell. Observing Ziolkowski's psychosexual universe, the viewer is left to wonder if these figures are enjoying themselves and one another, or if this is a contemporary re-envisioning of Bosch's 'The Garden of Earthly Delights.'

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### Hauser & Wirth

511 West 18th Street  
New York NY 10011

#### Gallery hours:

Tuesday – Saturday  
10 am – 6 pm

#### Summer opening hours:

20 June – 29 July  
Monday – Friday  
10 am – 6 pm

Hauser & Wirth New York will be closed  
Monday 4 July 2016

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Jakub Julian Ziolkowski  
Untitled  
2015  
Oil on canvas  
110 x 120 x 2.5 cm / 43 1/4 x 47 1/4 x 1 in

Lucas Blalock  
Autobiography  
2015 – 2016  
Archival inkjet print  
50.2 x 38.1 cm / 19 3/4 x 15 in

Nicola L.  
Antarctica Penetrable  
Ca. 1980  
Vinyl  
83.8 x 83.8 cm / 33 x 33 in