

Other Criteria launch Polly Morgan's *Still Birth* Series

17th February 2010:

8th April will mark the launch of Polly Morgan's new series *Still Birth*, created exclusively for Other Criteria and to be exhibited in their Hinde Street shop in London.

The edition, consisting of a stuffed chick suspended by a balloon within a bell jar, preserves a moment between death and decay. The title *Still Birth* is suggestive of a life terminated before it has begun. The work presents a further contradiction: the balloon to which the chick is attached attempts to rise but is contained by the glass dome in which it rests. Each bird is unique, and comes in a choice of three colours: red, green and blue.

Morgan's work is credited for having updated and reinvigorated the craft of taxidermy. The birds in her pieces are typically skinned and removed of fat deposits. The skin is then painted with Bird Tanning Solution, which effectively turns it into leather, and the body is stuffed with wood wool and hemp. Once the back of the neck is cut open and the brains and skulls removed, a wire is glued inside the head to create a malleable body.

Each *Still Birth* colour comes in a series of 10, available through Other Criteria priced at £2650 including VAT.

Other Criteria have two stores in London - on New Bond Street and Hinde Street - as well as a floor in Gagosian's new retail space on Madison Avenue in New York.

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Polly Morgan

Polly Morgan (b.1980) began working as an artist in October 2005. She learned taxidermy in order to satisfy a long held fascination with death and nature and has never sought to preserve corpses traditionally in the creature's mimicked natural habitat. She sees her frequent decision to preserve the death pose of a creature as a way to extend the moment between death and decay where the cadaver becomes something of fleeting beauty. She has been credited with helping to bring taxidermy up to date and contributing to a shift in public perception of taxidermy by her refusal to use any animal that hasn't died a natural or unpreventable death.

Morgan's work has recently shifted from the ornamental to monumental with Departures, her latest sculpture, consisting of 30 birds of various sizes (from finches to vultures) harnessed to, and appearing to carry, a man-sized cage. This was loosely modelled on a Victorian design for a flying machine whose objective was to harness birds' flight and steer them using a series of straps. Morgan was inspired to realise the inventor's ambition, which she saw as sort of conundrum: The machine enables the traveller to fly but enslaves the birds. The birds liberate the traveller but imprison him in a cage.

Other Criteria

Launched in 2005, Other Criteria began as a publishing company headed up by Damien Hirst, Hugh Allan and Frank Dunphy, with creative director Jason Beard. Evolving organically from their website, the company opened shop fronts in London on New Bond Street (October 2008) and Hinde Street (February 2009) as well as a floor in Gagosian's new retail space on Madison Avenue in New York. Collaborating closely with established and emerging artists, the store prides itself on displaying "great quality art by the best artists and making it available to everyone."

www.othercriteria.com