

PRESS RELEASE

POLLY MORGAN, *The Exquisite Corpse*

Trinity Church
1 Marylebone Road
London
NW1 4GD

4 October – 19 October 2007 Opening hours: Monday-Sunday 11am-5pm or by appointment

Private view: 03.10.07 from 6-9pm

Reconstruction presents the first UK solo exhibition of British born artist Polly Morgan, *The Exquisite Corpse*.

Polly Morgan has learned taxidermy in order to celebrate the corpse as a thing of beauty and significance, rather than attempting to 'resurrect' the body as is the usual objective of the craft. Her decision to preserve the death pose of a creature is a way of extending the moment between death and decay where the cadaver becomes a thing of fleeting beauty.

In terms of the settings used, her purpose is never to mimic their natural habitats, as might be seen in traditional displays, but to place them in less quotidian surroundings where they might transcend the ordinary associations of their species, ie a rat, which is usually connected with horror and disease might not seem out of place in an ice cream parlour. Seeing a creature thus reinvented might encourage us to view it differently.

"It's like when we look for something that's right in front of our noses. The reason we can't find it is because it's always there. We're far more likely to notice a can of beans in the bathroom than we are in the kitchen cupboard".

The Exquisite Corpse is the name of a game invented by the Surrealists, a group of artists whose unexpected juxtapositions and way of manipulating forms has inspired some of Morgan's work. *The Exquisite Corpse* brings together nine new works. Ranging from *Living Room*, a single baby bird not much bigger than a bumble bee crouched in the corner of a vast Perspex box, to *Former Things*, a large scale installation with a waxwork female figure hunched over a table laid for two that appears to be deteriorating in the position where her dining partner should be. Dead creatures populate his place setting, his chair is empty and his cutlery and crockery appear to be melting off the table's edge.

Morgan has had much interest from collectors and media alike. 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.