

PIPPY HOULDSWORTH GALLERY

Press Release

POLLY MORGAN

In THE BOX

2 – 31 May 2014

Private View

Thursday 1 May, 6-8pm



Pippy Houldsworth Gallery is delighted to present a new commission in The Box by British artist Polly Morgan. Upturning prevailing attitudes towards taxidermy, the artist uses animals as raw materials within her work. Essentially, the artist uses their remains to play out dark, macabre narratives which tap into the uncanny. Directly confronting death, Morgan's sculptures manifest an innate curiosity into the internal mechanisms of the body. For the first time, the artist will unveil the underlying artifice of the taxidermy process in The Box.

Resembling a zoological display case, the work features a taxidermied python wound tightly around a gnarled, wooden branch. Unlike previous incarnations of The Box, Morgan has chosen to break out of the confines of the project space; embroiled together, both the snake and the branch emerge through a crack in the glass as if they have bludgeoned their way out.

Unusually, the snake is anatomically incomplete: dangling on a sinuous piece of skin, the serpent's tail remains unraveled and flat whilst the rest of the body is flawlessly lifelike. Here, Morgan has stopped stitching in order to reveal the wood, wire and thread interior. Similarly, the branch gradually transitions from looking like wood to fibreglass, with artificial fibres sticking haphazardly out of the end, thus embodying the experimental nature of Morgan's deployment of taxidermy.

Discussing the work, Morgan explains that: 'the branch and snake combination subtly alludes to a phallus, whilst The Box (conveniently also a slang term for) to a vagina. To me it's a reflection on the dismantling of a relationship; tightly bound and seemingly authentic to start with, unraveled and raw at the end.'

Polly Morgan (b. 1980) lives and works in London. Past exhibitions include those at New Art Gallery, Walsall; Haunch of Venison, London; White Cube, London; Robilant + Voena, Milan; All Visual Arts, London; Bexley Hall, Bexley and Other Criteria, London. Her work is featured in numerous international collections including the Thomas Olbricht Collection, Berlin; Zabłudowicz Collection, London; New Art Gallery, Walsall and the David Roberts Art Foundation, London.

Upcoming: 6 June 2014 – 5 July 2014

Rachel Goodyear

Muzzles and Murmurs, Main Gallery