

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS

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MIQUEL BARCELÓ

May 24 – July 29 2011

Private View 23 May 2011 6 – 8:30pm

Ben Brown Fine Arts is extremely proud to present the first Hong Kong exhibition of recent works by internationally renowned Spanish artist Miquel Barceló; widely regarded as one of the most important artists working today. The exhibition will present a number of large, heavily textured and abstract paintings, forming a contextual backdrop to the ceramic and bronze works which have played a crucial role in the artist's practice since the mid-1990s. Barceló parlays the traditional serious nature of sculpture, into expressionist emotive casts of bronze, one of his preferred mediums. Thus, the small and uncanny *Pinocchio mort*, a cast representing a human skull with an oversized nose successfully functions as an eyebrow raising counterpart of the equally witty, giant *Elephantret*.

Enrique Juncosa, former curator of the Irish Museum of Modern Art and Miquel Barceló's solo exhibition at the Venice Biennale, describes Barceló as "one of the few contemporary artists who feels comfortable working in a rural idiom. In doing so, he confronts subjects of fundamental importance, subjects that have troubled and preoccupied us for an eternity."

In the wake of his first voyage to Africa in 1988, Barceló had created a large number of landscapes and works based on what he had seen and experienced there. For Barceló, *Des Tomates Blancs*, 2010, marks a dazzling return to whiteness still dominant within his artscape. Imbued with the whites from his portraits of Albinos in Africa, the mainly crisp landscape is articulated only by scattered rock-strewn tomatoes with raking shadows cast by each mound. The content of the picture has been stripped away, perfectly recalling the desert pictures, personal reference points from a visual lexicon that is filled with the artist's own associations rather than strict geography.

Alongside the artist's solo exhibition in the Hong Kong gallery, Ben Brown Fine Arts is excited to present a monumental bronze sculpture, *Elephantret*, 2007 which will be on public display in the main exhibition halls of Art HK 11.

About Miquel Barceló

Miquel Barceló was born Majorca, Spain in 1957. He studied at the School of Arts and Crafts in Palma and the Fine Arts Academy in Barcelona. In 1974 he held his first solo exhibition at the Picarol Art Gallery in Cala d'Or, Majorca. During the 1980s he travelled in Europe, the United States and West Africa. He achieved international acclaim in 1982 for his participation at Documenta 7 in Kassel. The artist lives between Paris, Majorca and Segou, Mali.

Barceló works with a wide range of media in his many different projects, which have included backdrops for opera, murals and engravings, and terracotta and ceramic sculptures. From 2001 to 2006, Barceló worked on a project for the cathedral in Palma, Spain covering the walls of the 14th century chapel in terracotta and then decorating it with images relating to the sixth chapter of the Gospel of St John. In 2004 Barceló's watercolours, illustrating Dante's Divine Comedy, were shown at the Louvre Museum in Paris. Thus, he became the youngest artist ever shown in this museum. In 2008, Barceló unveiled his extraordinary 16,000-square-foot mural covering the interior dome of the United Nations building in Geneva, which features hundreds of dangling multi-coloured stalactite forms.

Recent solo exhibitions include those organised at the Pinacoteca do Estado, São Paulo, 2003; Musée du Louvre, Paris, 2004; Galerie Bruno Bischofberger, Zurich, 2005; and the Sala Kubo, Donostia-San Sebastián, 2005. His work exists in many prominent international collections such as Centre Pompidou, Guggenheim Bilbao Museum, and Museu d'art Contemporani de Barcelona.

The artist will be in attendance at the Private View and is available for interviews. Please direct any press requests towards Whitney Ferrare at +852 2522 9600 or whitney@benbrownfinearts.com

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