

Stamford Advocate Pulse
July 18, 2010

<http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/default/article/Urs-Fischer-switches-realities-at-the-Brant-580059.php>

Flights of Fancy

Art: URS FISCHER SOLO SHOW A REAL EYE OPENER

By Abby Luby

The publishing mogul Peter Brant is melting right before our eyes. The life-size wax sculpture of Brant, replete with flickering wick dripping from atop his head, is one of the more surreal and quirky pieces at the current show "Oscar the Grouch," an exhibition by the young, Swiss artist Urs Fischer at the Brant Foundation Art Study Center in Greenwich.

In case you've never been to this relatively new art space – a 9,800 square foot gallery converted from a stone barn – the collection is the epitome of contemporary art of which Brant is a fervent collector.



"Untitled (Seated)", 2010

For several decades Brant has collected high end artists such as Francesco Clemente, Eric Fischl, Karen Kilimnik, Elizabeth Peyton, Jean-Michel Basquiat David Salle, Kenny Scharf, Jeff Koons, Julian Schnabel, Cindy Sherman. Fischer is included in this list and the exhibit represents the first solo show since the Center initially opened last year.

Brant says Fischer had a strong vision for the show. "His concept for The Brant Foundation was appealing as it is cutting edge, unique,

and because the artist was intimately involved in bringing his ideas to fruition." Fischer, known for site-specific installation work, jack-hammered his stamp on the show. "You," is a large excavation on the lower gallery floor made by gauging out a concrete floor and digging down ten feet.

"Urs literally ripped through layers of wood and plumbing, down to the actual farm soil on which the building's concrete foundation was poured," says Brant's daughter, Allison, director of the center.



"Abstract Slavery", 2008

"Untitled (Hole)," is a large aluminum cast of a makeshift grave whose surface of coal-like clumps incongruously spills onto a pale, pristine wood floor of the upper gallery. The grave actually sinks down below and through the floor protruding into a lower gallery where the dark, crude suspended mass blasts obtrusively into

another part of the show. Curiously the piece allows

the viewer to make a laterally visual connection from upstairs to downstairs.

Fischer suspends our belief up another notch with his "Abstract Slavery," printed wallpaper that is a flattened out version of Brant's home library and "Art Deco Room." These rooms actually exist in three dimensions right across from the foundation on North Street. The wallpaper satisfies our curiosity about the personal affects in the Brant household. Allison Brant says the work is very detailed.

"It ["Abstract Slavery"] includes an incredible amount of detail featuring the very books and photos found in my father's personal library. It's incredible when you stop and think that the work is actually 2-D."

This very realistic wallpaper surrounds the room with two cast wax statues of Brant, one standing and one sitting. When the wick is fired up the melting paraffin wax mixture starts a slow-drip, air borne flight down through a waxy grate to the floor below.

The show is further nuanced with a duet of mirrored boxes, each depicting various facets of everyday objects such as a Diet Coke can and a halved onion, publicity stills from Hollywood's Golden

Age, and a cast of his with a fresh egg dangling from the pointer finger.

Brant says the show grew out of a true collaboration, a working relationship he wishes to duplicate with artists in upcoming shows at the center.



"Untitled (hole)", 2007

"We have an initial idea for the exhibition and work in a collaborative, supportive manner throughout the process as the artist brings his or her vision for the show to fruition. This process held true when working with Urs and we hope to continue on such path in presenting upcoming exhibits."

Urs Fischer's "Oscar the Grouch" will remain on view at The Brant

Foundation Art Study Center through Spring 2011. Although the center is open to the public, you have to make an appointment to see the exhibit by emailing either thebrantfoundation@gmail.com or INFO@BRANTFOUNDATION.ORG. The word is it books up rather quickly.

The Brant Foundation Art Study Center
941 North Street, Greenwich, Connecticut
Tuesday - Saturday by appointment
203.869.0611