

# MARY BOONE GALLERY

745 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10151. 212.752.2929

## LAURIE SIMMONS

### *CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN: WORKS FROM 1990-1994*

27 April to 27 July 2018

On 27 April 2018, Mary Boone Gallery will open at its Chelsea location *Clothes Make the Man: Works from 1990-1994*, a solo exhibition featuring the work of LAURIE SIMMONS, curated by Piper Marshall. The exhibition, in collaboration with Salon 94, opens concurrently with Simmons's show of new work at Salon 94, titled *2017: The Mess and Some New*.

*Clothes Make the Man: Works from 1990-1994* brings together Simmons's celebrated *Walking & Lying Objects* series (begun in 1987) with *Café of the Inner Mind* (1994) alongside *Clothes Make the Man* (1990-ongoing).

In *Walking & Lying Objects* Simmons appends ordinary domestic objects to human legs, staging them in anthropomorphized tableaux with high-contrast lighting. At once humorous and dramatic, this ongoing series was prompted by Simmons's childhood memory of a television show featuring dancing matchstick and cigarette boxes. Simmons has described these images as a way of investigating "brawn over brains—literally lifting and propping up the domestic object into significance... It always stayed with me as a kind of image of something that was so physical, without a brain, without a heart, without a mind." This group of five images from *Walking & Lying Objects* features a playful investigation of desire for food, including a lush red tomato, delicately iced doughnut, and a nostalgic hot dog.

In *Café of the Inner Mind*, one of the very few series by the artist that features male subjects, Simmons continues her play on yearning and interior life by staging the secret cravings of men. Wooden ventriloquist dummies are arranged in various settings such as a restaurant, a men's bathroom, a lush country field, or a vacant staircase. Each dummy has above his head a "thought bubble" revealing image-based fantasies of their inner desires: a ménage à trois, attractive legs in high heels, missiles, male body builders, or alternative meals. Though made in 1994, Simmons's *Café* series has rarely been shown and now feels acutely prescient to the media exposure of private desires during investigations of sexual harassment and the #metoo movement.

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Stepping out of the fantasy images of the *Café* series, *Clothes Make the Man* presents rare sculptures from Simmons's practice: resin dolls cast from real ventriloquist dummies sit upright in custom wooden chairs, dressed by Simmons in vintage 1950s children's clothing. The group of nearly identical dummies play with the clownish cultural assumption that individuals are profoundly different based solely on shallow appearances. "It was about these kinds of minute differences in the way we look or act that make us feel like we're so profoundly different. Like 'I'm not like you because you're wearing a blue shirt; I'm wearing a yellow shirt. You're wearing a bow tie; I'm wearing a string tie. We are so different.'"

The exhibition *Clothes Make the Man: Works from 1990-1994* is on view at Mary Boone Gallery, 541 West 24 Street, from 27 April through 27 July 2018. For further information, please contact Ron Warren at the Gallery, or visit our website [www.maryboonegallery.com](http://www.maryboonegallery.com).

2017: *The Mess and Some New* is on view at Salon 94 Bowery, 243 Bowery, from 27 April through 20 June 2018.