

TANYA LEIGHTON

PRESS RELEASE

-

BRUCE MCLEAN - WAITER WAITER CURATOR CURATOR

13 February – 16 April 2011

PREVIEW Saturday 12 February, 6 – 9 PM

PERFORMANCE: 8 PM

Tanya Leighton Gallery will present the first solo exhibition in Berlin by celebrated British Conceptual artist Bruce McLean (born London, 1944). Using diverse media and iconoclastic approaches, McLean's work is preoccupied with the minutiae of human behaviour – the gestures, styles and mannerisms that orchestrate our lives. His art reveals a subversive desire to poke fun at every imaginable artistic or social convention.

The exhibition will present original documentation of McLean's performance projects from the late 1960s, '70s and '80s alongside films that have never been shown before in Germany. Working in a variety of mediums including painting, film and video projection, performance and photography, Bruce McLean is one of the most important artists of his generation.

It was with live works that McLean first grabbed the attention of the art world. An impulsive, energetic Glaswegian, he became known as an art world 'dare-devil' by critiquing the fashion-oriented, social climbing nature of the contemporary art world in the '70s. At St Martins his professors included the great sculptors of the day, Anthony Caro and Phillip King, whose work he mocked ruthlessly. In 'Pose Work for Plinths I' (1971; London, Tate), he used his own body to parody the poses of Henry Moore's celebrated reclining figures, daring to mock the grand master himself.

The notion of using his whole body as a sculptural vehicle of expression led him to explore live actions: 'it was when we (a collective) invented the concept of 'pose' that We could do anything'. Pose was live sculpture: Not mime, not theatre, but live sculpture. My colleagues, Paul Richards, Ron Carr, Garry Chitty, Robin Fletcher and I created Nice Style 'The World's First Pose Band', which performed for several years, offering audiences such priceless gems as the 'semi-domestic spectacular Deep Freeze, a four-part pose opera based on the lifestyle and values of a mid-west American vacuum cleaner operative'. Behind the obvious humour was a desire to break with the establishment, something that he has continued to do throughout his life and work. In 1972, for instance, he was offered an exhibition at the Tate Gallery, but opted, for a 'retrospective' lasting only one day. 'King for a Day' consisted of catalogue entries for a thousand mock-conceptual works, among them The Society for Making Art Deadly Serious piece, Henry Moore revisited for the 10th Time piece and There's no business like the Art business piece (sung).

TANYA LEIGHTON

The exhibition WAITER WAITER CURATOR CURATOR will present one of McLean's little-known early films 'Crease Crisis' (1973). 'Crease Crisis' creates an absurdist mise-en-scène in which Paul Richards is seen maniacally and obsessively reviewing his appearance in a mirror, occasionally ironing parts of his trench coat, in a vain and ultimately useless attempt to emulate the image of the American movie star Victor Mature, whose picture hangs on the wall.

One of the latest pieces within the exhibition is a short film: 'Soup. A Concept Consommé' that displays McLean's keen script-writing skills. Accentuating the 'theatre' of restaurant-going 'Soup' takes its theme from the history of Modernist sculpture and the observations of manners, gestures and behaviours of staff and customers in an up-market restaurant. Incisively humorous both films derive from a concern with the seemingly trivial aspects of appearance and body language, and how they inform the different identities we knowingly and subconsciously assume.

—

The first exhibition McLean participated in was the experimental and highly regarded 'When Attitudes Become Form', curated by the late Harald Szeemann, at the Kunsthalle Bern. Other seminal shows he participated in were 'Op Losse Schroeven', Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam 1969; 'Information', curated by Kynaston L. McShine at the Museum of Modern Art New York 1970, and 'The British Avant Garde', New York Cultural Centre 1970. In the 1980's other important shows included 'A New Spirit in Painting', Royal Academy 1981; 'Zeitgeist', The Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin 1982; and 'documenta 6, 7 & 8', Kassel.

Between 1981 and 1986 — when the gallery closed — McLean had nine solo and group exhibitions at D'Offay Gallery in London, showing alongside Andre, Baselitz, Beuys, Clemente, Gilbert & George, Johns, Kelly, Kiefer, de Kooning, Koons, Kounellis, Long, Merz, Miyajima, Mucha, Nauman, Polke, Richter, Schnabel, Smith, Turrell, Twombly, Viola, Warhol, and Weiner.

Please join us for the private view and performance on Saturday 12th February, 6-9pm.

For further information and images please contact info@tanyaleighnton.com or call + 49 (0)30 221607770.

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
Installation view, 'Waiter Waiter Curator Curator', Tanya Leighton Gallery
12 February - 16 April 2011

TANYA LEIGHTON



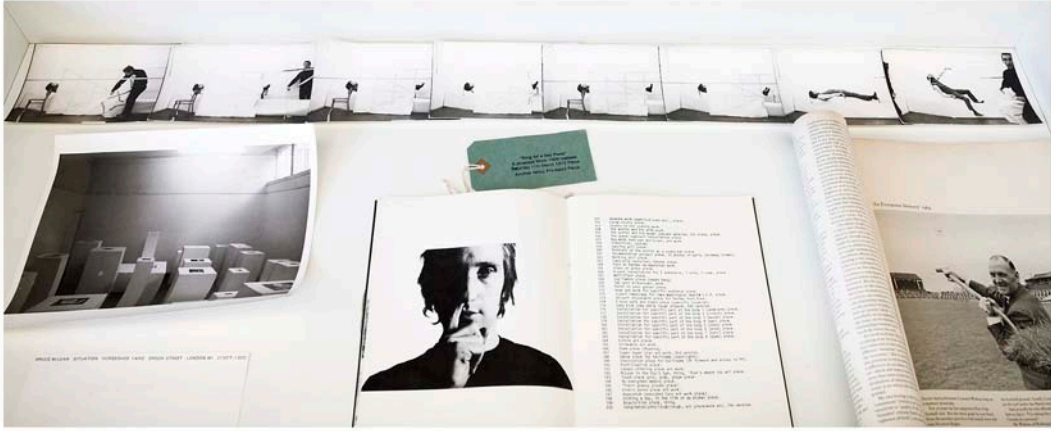
Bruce McLean
Installation view, 'Waiter Waiter Curator Curator', Tanya Leighton Gallery
12 February - 16 April 2011

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
Installation view, 'Waiter Waiter Curator Curator', Tanya Leighton Gallery
12 February - 16 April 2011

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean

Installation view, 'Waiter Waiter Curator Curator', Tanya Leighton Gallery
12 February - 16 April 2011

Contents in vitrine:

'Situation (Levitation Piece)', 1971
8 Unique black-and-white photographs
15 x 10cm each

'Objects No Concepts'

(photograph of installation of plinths with photocopied objects from
magazines)

Installation view, 'Situation', Horseshoe Yard, Brooke Street London, 1971

Invitation card - 'Situation, Horseshoe Yard, Brooke Street London, 1971

'King for a Day - one day retrospective,' Tate Gallery, 11 March 1972

Proposal for work 1969, realized at Tate Gallery, London, 2971

'Installation for Specific Part of The Body 5 (Nose) Piece', 1969

'Evergreen memory', 1969

Studio International, Vol. 181, May 1971, pg. 207

TANYA LEIGHTON



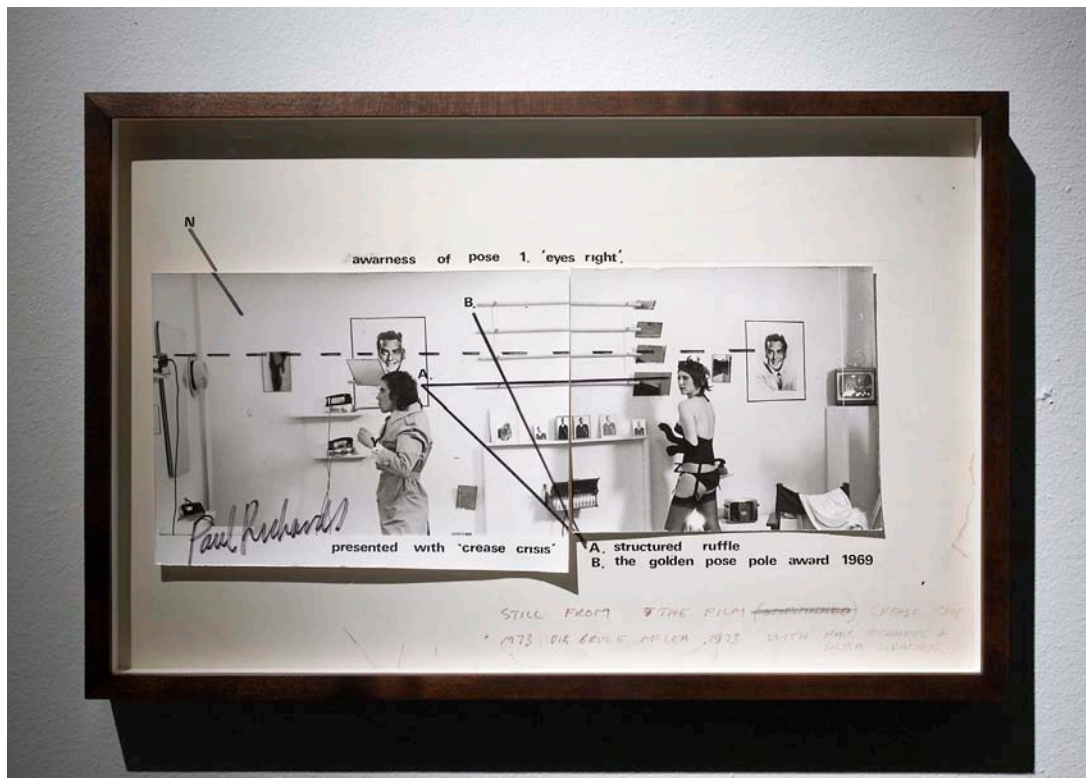
Bruce McLean
'Slide Show of Early Work' (details), 1965-1971
70 x 35mm slides
Edition of 5 + 2 AP
MCLEAN-2011-0005

TANYA LEIGHTON



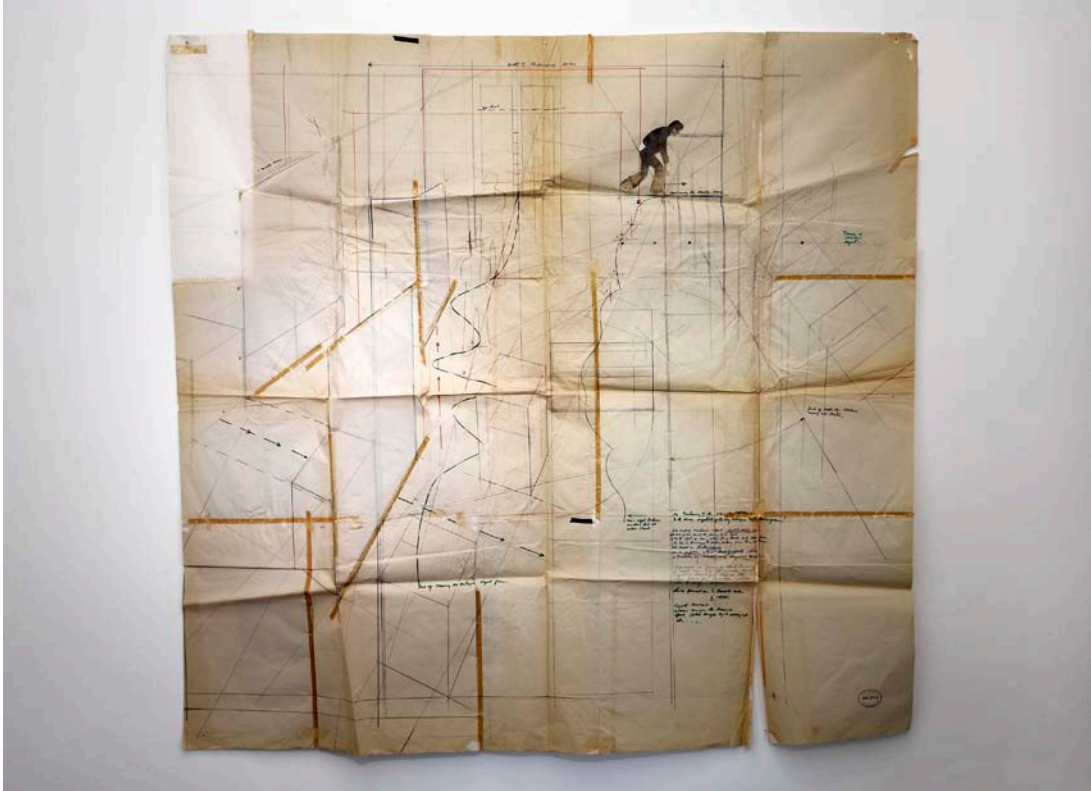
Bruce McLean
'Crease Crisis', 1973
16mm film; colour, silent
25 minutes
Edition of 5 + 2 AP
MCLEAN-2010-0002

A 16mm film in which McLean obsessively reviews his appearance in a mirror, occasionally ironing parts of his trench coat, in a vain and ultimately useless attempt to emulate the image of the American movie star Victor Mature, whose picture hangs on the wall.



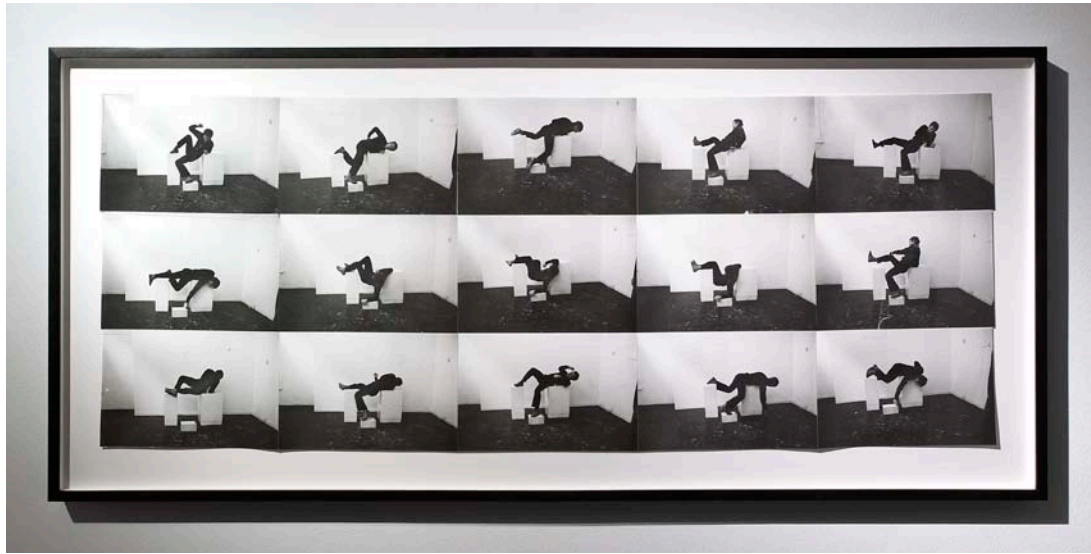
Bruce McLean
'Crease Crisis', 1973
Unique modified black-and-white photograph
43 x 27.5 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0006

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'Nice Style, End of an Era', 1975
Drawing
170 cm x 180 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0008

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'Pose Work for Plinths', 1971
15 black-and-white photographs
10 x 15.5 cm each
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0007

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'Bye-Bye Blackbird', 1969
Unique black-and-white photograph
31.5 x 27 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0009

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'People Who Make Art in Glass Houses', 1969
Unique black-and-white photograph
51.5 x 36.5 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0019

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'Tea on the Knee', 1971
23.5 x 15 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0004

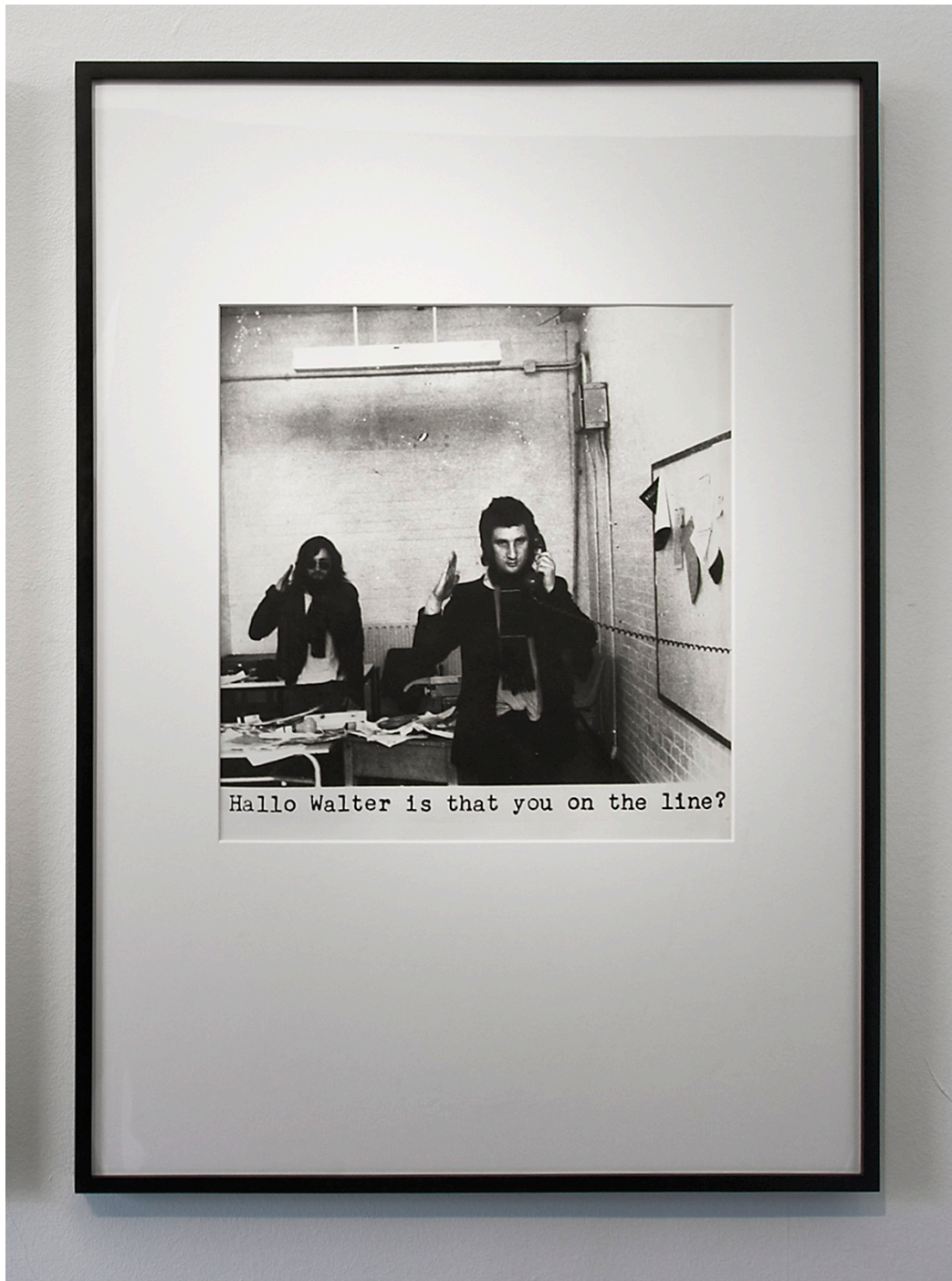
TANYA LEIGHTON



A Million smiles for one of your
miles Walter.

Bruce McLean
'A Million Smiles for One of Your Miles Walter', 1971
Unique black-and-white photograph
40 x 38 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0010

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'Hello Walter Is That You on The Line?', 1971
Unique black-and-white photograph
40 x 39 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0011

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'Sand Pile Revisited', 1969
Unique black-and-white photograph
14.5 x 23 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0012

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'Fallen Warrior', 1969
Unique black-and-white photograph
22.5 x 15.5 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0013

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'Running Sculpture', 1969
Unique black-and-white photograph
17 x 26 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0014

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'Mirror Work', 1969
Unique black-and-white photograph
20 x 19.5 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0015)

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'Taking a Line For a Walk', 1969
Unique black-and-white photograph
18 x 23 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0016

TANYA LEIGHTON



Bruce McLean
'Three Parts of Installation for Body (Framing devices)', 1969
Unique black-and-white photograph
26 x 17 cm
Unique
MCLEAN-2011-0017