

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

KAREL FUNK

at the Musée d'art contemporain
September 20, 2007 to January 6, 2008

Montréal, September 11, 2007. Portraits of men that seem straight out of the Renaissance, dressed in high-tech outdoor wear; the technical virtuosity of the Flemish masters, in hyperrealistic paintings that verge on the photographic; intimate portraits of people who do not reveal themselves. Come fall under their spell... The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal presents the exhibition *Karel Funk* from September 20, 2007 to January 6, 2008.

The exhibition

Karel Funk produces portraits of men shown in head-and-shoulders view, painted in acrylic on wood panels. Dressed in protective outdoor clothing, the subjects are often seen in three-quarter profile or from behind, with their heads bowed or covered with a hood, so that we are rarely allowed to meet the models' gaze. Each of them is set against a neutral, all-white background, setting off the figure in a vague space that lacks any real depth. His paintings suggest multiple references to art history, in particular to certain Renaissance portraits, but remain firmly rooted in the present.

The fascination exerted by Karel Funk's work stems in large part from the tensions between the extreme precision of the rendering and the imprecision of the space, between the revelation of the body and the restraint of the pose, between the personal and the anonymous.

The exhibition—the artist's first in a museum—features a group of portraits produced over the past five years. It was organized by Pierre Landry, curator at the Musée.

Karel Funk

Karel Funk was born in 1971 in Winnipeg, where he continues to live and work. In the space of less than five years, he has attracted remarkable critical notice with his exhibitions at the 303 Gallery in New York (2004 and 2007). In 2004, *Artforum* rated him one of the "Year's Best." Robert Rosenblum elaborated: "An unforgettable miniature portrait gallery of eleven monkish aliens from the bleak world of North Face. ... What we see most of are small patches of exposed skin and hair, rendered with a fanatical hyperrealism of stubble and pore that might make a Flemish primitive jealous."

Catalogue

A 64-page catalogue accompanies the exhibition. It contains essays by the show's curator Pierre Landry and by Carter Foster, curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art, a biobibliography and 21 illustrations. The catalogue may be purchased for \$19.95 at the museum's Olivieri Bookstore or from your local bookseller.

Meet the artist

Karel Funk will meet the public on Wednesday, September 19, 2007 at 5:30 p.m. in the Banque Laurentienne Gallery. The meeting will take place in English.

The Musée d'art contemporain is a provincially owned corporation funded by the Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine du Québec. It receives additional funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts, as well as from Lichen Communications.

-30-

Source and information:
Danielle Legentil
Public Relations Coordinator

Tel.: (514) 847-6232
E-mail: danielle.legentil@macm.org