

# PAUL MCCARTHY EXHIBITION AT TARMAK 22

This month Hauser & Wirth, an international gallery devoted to contemporary and modern art, is running two simultaneous exhibitions of celebrated artist Paul McCarthy. A new series of large-scale drawings called 'A&E Drawing Session, Santa Anita' is available online, while a physical exhibition on the subject of 'Alpine Stories and other Dystopias' is being presented in Gstaad.

The exhibition space at Tarmak 22 is stunning. Offering expansive views over the Gstaad Airport and mountain landscape, it provides an impressive backdrop to McCarthy's first exhibition in the Swiss Alps. Drawn from the artist's work spanning two decades, the collection of drawings, photographs, sculptures and video is at once provocative and powerful.

We were welcomed by attentive gallery staff who were happy to answer questions and share their knowledge of the artist and his work. It was interesting to learn that the theme behind the exhibition reflects McCarthy's long interest in the legends and stories of the Swiss Alps. A Swiss enthusiast, McCarthy has traced unlikely connections between the alpine region and his home city of Los Angeles. This obsession stemmed from a trip to Disneyland when he first encountered the Matterhorn ride. He quickly became fascinated with the alpine region and the way in which long-standing European tales have been consumed and commercialised by Hollywood's Disneyland.

James Koch, partner and executive director at Hauser & Wirth, explained the approach behind the exhibitions: "We're delighted that we can present the incredible work of Paul McCarthy in Gstaad, whilst also offering our audiences elsewhere a chance to experience his work. We feel that the physical and online components greatly complement each other as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.



Paul McCarthy  
*White Snow Dwarf  
(Sleepy) 2010*  
Brown silicone  
173.4 x 157.5 x 156.2 cm  
/ 68 1/4 x 62 x 61 1/2 in

© Paul McCarthy. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth. Photograph: Frederik Nilsen

powerful and often malevolent structures in Western society. Koch hopes that visitors will leave with the experience that beneath all pre-packaged,

"Each piece shown in Gstaad looks beneath the endearing façades of classic Disney productions and the sanitised versions of European fables, questioning the contrived purity that many well-known characters and cultural fables embody – such as Heidi, Snow White and Santa Claus. The works are united by their themes of innocence and utopia, and their inverses of depravity and dystopia. They were selected from the artist's acclaimed large-scale projects and series Heidi, White Snow, and Caribbean Pirates, as well as his PROPO photographs."

McCarthy's work is thought-provoking and intriguing, exposing the

Disney-esque facades lurk wild, untamed urges and dystopian truths which can extend to all facets of life.

By combining these ideas with the stunning views of the mountain landscape around Tarmak 22, McCarthy has succeeded in creating a small, dystopian Disneyland in the Swiss mountains.

ANNA CHARLES

*The exhibition runs from 18 July – 15 August at Tarmak 22, Gstaad Saanen Airport; Wednesday – Sunday 11:00 – 17:00, or by appointment 033 748 62 20.*

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