

JOHN BOCK**20 September - 20 October 2001**

Sadie Coles HQ is pleased to present the first one-person exhibition in the UK by German artist John Bock. Bock's surreal modus operandi is a combination of lecture, performance and installation. The Berlin-based artist expounds pseudo-scientific-social theories (often in gibberish) in clownish staged performances during which he encounters and builds sculpture made from found objects. At the Venice Biennale in 1999, in a piece called Approximation Rezipienten-bedarfniscomaUrUltraUse-MaterialMiniMax, Bock's elaborate shantytown structure involved cubicles where he burrowed and nested as well as places where the audience interacted with the artist. Putting their arms through a slot, their limbs were made into a temporary sculpture of shaving cream, cling-film and tin foil. At the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Bock staged a fashion show (Multiple Quasi-Maybe-Me-Be-Updown) featuring friends, guards and museum staff wearing outlandish clothes and moving up and down the escalators parodying the pretension of fashion, social etiquette in contemporary museums and Dada theatre.

Comparisons have been made with Joseph Beuys and the Viennese Actionists and there is a good-humoured parody of both of these artists and of contemporary artists such as Jason Rhoades and Matthew Barney. Intentionally confusing, Bock challenges the audience to comprehend and examine everyday obstacles, be they intellectual, physical or linguistic.

John Bock lives and works in Berlin. His work was exhibited at the Berlin Biennale in 1998 and Venice Biennale of 1999; the Museum of Modern Art, New York was the site of four lectures in 2000; and a catalogue documenting the most important lectures has just been published by Cantz for exhibitions in Bremen and Bonn.