

Klara Kristalova
Big Girl Now
February 27 – April 26, 2014
201 Chrystie Street, New York

Opening Reception: Thursday, February 27, 2014, 6-8PM



New York, NY January 28, 2014 — Lehmann Maupin is pleased to present an exhibition of new ceramic sculptures by Czechoslovakian-born and Sweden-based artist Klara Kristalova, on view February 27 - April 26, 2014 at the gallery's 201 Chrystie Street location. In her second exhibition with the gallery, Kristalova continues her work in ceramics to visualize psychological states of being and explore the complexity of the human condition.

With each sculpture, Kristalova builds an imaginative narrative around common emotions and everyday situations, turning to a diversity of influences that include music, memory and current events, literature, myths and fairytales. Her slightly unsettling hand-painted figures—often hybrids of human, animal, insect or plant forms—communicate a tension but also a balance between states of being or transformation. Wavering between the innocent and disturbing, dreamlike and nightmarish, masculine and feminine, Kristalova's sculptures evoke the dualities and multiple dimensions that exist within human nature.

The idea of transformation, particularly the age of adolescence as a time of both physical and psychological change, has been a recurring theme in Kristalova's work. In *Big Girl Now*, Kristalova presents a group of portraits of women rooted in a more established period of the life cycle, suggesting that the transformation of youth does not cease once one is “grown up”. Innocence and freedom continue to give way to societal pressures, a constantly evolving sense of self, and daily choices that may impact the direction of one's life. These figures seem to be weighted with past experiences, choices, failures and regrets, but also wisdom, poise and hope.

The arresting nature of Kristalova's imagery is further heightened by the handcrafted quality of the surface and awkward scale of the sculptures. The female figure in *Birdwoman* (2013), for example, confronts the viewer with her black almond-shaped eyes, conveying a sense of scrutiny and confidence, but simultaneously seems uncomfortable with her beak for a nose and a body covered entirely in white feathers, each carefully textured and molded by the artist's hand. In *Little Girl Growing* (2013), a young woman tightly clutches, or perhaps tries to break free from, the branches sprouting from her body. The spider web pattern of cracks penetrating the glaze and smeared facial features augment the ambivalent emotion conveyed in the woman's stance.

Kristalova's exhibition of new work at Lehmann Maupin will coincide with a show of new work at Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin entitled *Underworld* from February 27 to April 12, 2014 at their 909 Madison Avenue gallery in New York.

Klara Kristalova was born in 1967 in Czechoslovakia. She studied at the Konsthogskolan Royal University College of Fine Arts, Sweden, graduating in 1994. She has recently presented solo exhibitions at Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden (2012); Goteborgs Konstmuseum, Goteborgs, Sweden (2012); Västerås Konstmuseum, Västerås, Sweden (2013) and SITE Santa Fe, New Mexico (2009). In 2011, Kristalova was featured in the *New Works* exhibition series at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Her work is also currently on view in *Body & Soul: New International Ceramics* at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York through March 2, 2014. Kristalova's work is included in numerous collections including the Moderna Museet/Modern Museum, Stockholm, Sweden, the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden, and Norrköpings Konstmuseum, Sweden. Klara Kristalova joined Lehmann Maupin in 2011, and lives and works in Norrtälje, Sweden.

For more information on the artist, please contact Marta de Movellan at Lehmann Maupin at +1 212 255 2923 or visit www.lehmannmaupin.com.

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