

VENUS

MANHATTAN | LOS ANGELES

Wall Street International, February 16, 2016.

Wall Street International

ART

FÉTICHE, February 26 – April 16, 2016 at VENUS New York



Jeff Koons Ushering in Banality, 1988 Polychromed wood 38 x 62 x 30 inches 96.5 x 157.5 x 76.2 cm

VENUS is pleased to present *Fétiche*, a group show juxtaposing contemporary Western art with historic African and Oceanic works to examine the literal power that art objects confer. In the early Twentieth Century, African and Oceanic objects were popular collectibles and a source of inspiration for many European artists.

Picasso references African aesthetics in several Cubist masterpieces, most notably *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)*. Oceanic works from New Guinea and the Pacific Islands are often referenced in Surrealist art, and were collected by artists and poets such as Alexander Calder and André Breton. African and Oceanic works often exist in a mystical or religious context, though in most instances their exact function remains unknown. Collectors have historically stripped them of their native contexts, instead focusing on their aesthetic “otherness.” Today, these objects exist as curios or spoils of colonialism—rare and exotic souvenirs of cultures forever disrupted by the advance of Western civilization.

The modern and contemporary works included in the show have no overt spiritual or mystical purpose. Though not religious in a traditional sense, there is significant financial and metaphysical value placed on contemporary art, and its ownership grants power via social status and prestige. The various motivations to possess art are seldom explored, though the entire art market relies upon a system of beliefs that highlights issues of relevancy, timeliness, and critical consensus.

Fétiche explores the ways in which contemporary and indigenous works bestow authority and power within significantly different social structures. *Fétiche* will include a broad array of significant African and Oceanic works alongside important post-war and contemporary art by artists including Huma Bhabha, Will Boone, Bernard Buffet, Alexander Calder, Elaine Cameron-Weir, Maurizio Cattelan, Walter Dahn, Jean Dubuffet, Jimmie Durham, Lynn Foulkes, Damien Hirst, Jeff Koons, David Medalla, Francis Picabia, Richard Prince, Lucas Samaras, and Andra Ursuta.



Vente d'Une Superbe Divinite (Sale of a Superb Divinity) from Niger, Mali, 1200-1400 AD,
Terracotta, 21 1/2 inches high



Walter Dahn, *Untitled (Don Quixote)*, 1985, Oil on canvas, 98 x 78 inches



Ivory Initiation Figurine, Lega, R.D.C.