

For immediate release

PRESS RELEASE

Kate Hawkins

The King Of Hearts Has No Moustache

Opening: 16 February 2012

Exhibition dates: 17 February – 17 March 2012

Gallery opening times: Wednesday - Saturday, 12 – 6pm, or by appointment

Gallery Vela is delighted to present a solo exhibition of new works by London-based artist, Kate Hawkins. This will be the most comprehensive exhibition of new work to date.

Moustaches are performative. As well as being plays on sincerity they are just plays. A moustache, unlike a beard, performs its presence – it can only come into being by consciously cutting away everything around it. And through acting itself out, it tends to reveal more than it hides. Sometimes a moustache is so parodic and consciously curated, a spectator can forget he or she is witnessing a staged fiction at all. The moment of disorientation between fake and sincere is where the parody becomes the reality. And the ridiculed, the strong. The moustache becomes honest, not a cover-up: it becomes accountable for itself. Accountability, like moustache maintenance, is a fragile thing. There is a fine balance between too much and too little – physically a moustache needs distinctive parameters to be a moustache at all. It is a balance of nerve and skill. Like painting.

Hawkins' paintings, like moustaches, play with ideas of transparency in their realisation and display strategies. By making the spectator aware of the mechanics of producing and hanging a painting she considers modes of active and passive spectatorship in relation to performance and theatre. Hawkins is intrigued by social rituals as cultural stereotypes and ways in which society increasingly performs its own display. *The King Of Hearts Has No Moustache* explores these notions through the simultaneous exposure (the making visible of installation techniques) and disguise (the drawing of moustaches) of the paintings on show.

Kate Hawkins lives and works in London. She is currently researching a practice-based PhD at Winchester School of Art. Recent two person and group shows and performances include *My Brother is a Hairy Man*, George Polke, London, *Object Subjects*, Silverman, San Francisco, *Let's Be Civil*, AND/OR, London, *Psychedelica*, The ICA, *The Pelvic Flaw* and *IMateriall*, Physical Center, Guest Projects, London

Note to editors:

Images and detail biography of the artist are available on request, please contact Alli Beddoes: alli@galleryvela.com / 0207 636 8113