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## The Autobiography of Damian Moppett

Editorial Preview - REVIEWED

" Moppett has demonstrated a desire to look backward and inward simultaneously."



Damian Moppett, *Figure Study for Caryatid*, 2010 graphite on paper paper: 14 x 11 inches framed: 14 1/2 x 11 1/2 in. Courtesy of the artist.

### The Autobiography of Damian Moppett Aaron Carpenter

Rennie Collection's latest endeavor features video, sculptures and a wealth of paintings and drawings by Canadian artist Damian Moppett, as well as a large-scale special commission. Moppett often works in serial form, and his over-arching project sees a kind of omnivorous processing of art history paired with a hermetic self-reflexivity. By fervently collecting Moppett's work for over a decade, Bob Rennie, the principal of this contemporary art collection at Wing Sang in Vancouver, has made the exhibit something like a mid-career retrospective, yet prefers to describe it as an expansive self-portrait of the artist-at-work.

### Exhibitions & Events

- Derek Lerner, RHV Fine Art, Closes Feb 26
- Angela Bulloch in Antwerp Thru Jan 21
- Two Person Show at Sammlung, Falckenberg Through Mar 25
- Anselm Kiefer, London Closes Feb 26
- Art of Rebellion in Brooklyn, Closes Jan 26
- An Outer Place, NYC Closes Jan 28
- Sequoyah Aono, NYC Closes Jan 10
- et al Projects, NYC until Jan 13
- Goethe-Institut, NYC Until Dec 22, 2011
- Your Rainbow Panorama: Denmark

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- 2011 Governors Island Art Fair
- Art Asia Fair
- Art Elysses
- Art Fair Zurich
- Art Fairs International
- Art Forum Berlin
- Art Market Budapest October 27 -30
- Art Now Fair
- Art Space Beijing
- Art Toronto
- Arts in Bushwick
- Asia Triennial Manchester 2011
- Broadway Gallery NYC Contemporary Istanbul November 24-27
- Docks Art Fair 2011
- Fine Art Asia
- Frieze Art Fair
- HanseArt, Bremen Germany November 11-13
- Momenta Art
- Nada Art Fair, Miami Dec 1-4
- NY Arts Beijing Collection
- Pink Art Fair Seoul
- Scope Miami Dec 1-4
- SH Contemporary
- Texas Contemporary Art Fair October 20-23
- The Habitat Brooklyn

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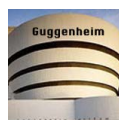
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A Note from our

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A central element to the exhibition is the comprehensive "Watercolour Drawing Project," an anthology of studies that document the artist's process as well as his research. Moppett depicts episodes from the past: Hollis Frampton modeling his Wittgenstein T-shirt, a grouchy Constantin Brancusi frowning impatiently in his studio. Among these pictures are fragments from the artist's life and work, renderings of his band's practice space, or his studio in flux. Many of these watercolor and graphite works are prodigiously rendered, mapping every cluttered corner of the studio, framing his oddly amateurish pottery and tilted, leaning metal and plaster sculptural forms. In sketching out his anachronistic, solipsistic autobiography Moppett has demonstrated a desire to look backward and inward simultaneously. His blunt citations heap the weight of history on his own work, distressing it, and thereby activating a slow self-consumptive or auto-cannibalistic aspect that is vital to his studio-bound practice.

Moppett's compulsion to compile is neatly solved by one of his more prominent formal devices: many of his sculptural works reveal a fascination with suspension, collapse, and gravitas. Conflating Rodin with Calder, Caro, Tony Smith, and others, the results are vaguely monstrous yet curiously generic sculptural forms that lean, teeter, and fold beneath the weight of an unseen entity. Perhaps it is the invisible yet intractable oppression of gravity that Moppett associates with the weight of history and the silent authority of the contemporary art canon.

Never has his work exemplified this more than in Broken Fall, Moppett's enormous new piece specially commissioned for this show. Hovering, falling, and breaking high overhead, its aluminum heft belies its structure, as it takes the form of a massive mobile. Caro's characteristic red seems to have migrated onto the hovering rods and discs that comprise the piece, activating and illuminating the cavernous gallery space. A few elements of the sculpture lay scattered below on the floor: equilibrium has apparently snapped. This small element of material fiction offers a kind of resolution to the viewer, a carefully composed breaking point.

Damian Moppett's works reveal their own potential. A prolific artist, Moppett creates work upon work, each with countless siblings. The inner logic of his practice dictates that he must also steal (or borrow) from himself in order to keep his practice venturing forth. His obliquely diaristic tendencies are never more revealed than when his work is viewed en masse. Viewers of this one-man omnibus are privy to elements of the artist's past, present, and future. If this exhibition comprises a self-portrait, it is no simple depiction but a multi-faceted work-in-progress that veers in, out, and over. Visitors are invited to look in any direction.

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