

David Shrigley

29 November 2007 – 19 January 2008
Preview Wednesday 28 November 2007, 6-8pm

David Shrigley, the Glasgow-based British artist returns to Stephen Friedman Gallery for his fifth exhibition.

'GOD IS IDLE' - exclaimed a monumental wall painting included in David Shrigley's recent solo exhibition at the Malmö Konsthall in Sweden. In Shrigley's world we might very well assume that God is idle; dark, troubling, parodic and often contradictory thoughts and actions spiral wildly out of control.

David Shrigley's drawings and hand-rendered texts are typically dead-pan in their humour and reveal chance utterings like snippets of over-heard conversations. Shrigley's voice is ever present in his artwork, using a disjunctive form of narrative that recalls the nonsensical and anarchic writing of Spike Milligan or the haphazard comedy of 'The Goon Show' – the famous comedy troupe which introduced a Dada sensibility to a depressed post-war Britain. Reoccurring themes and thoughts pervade his story-telling capturing child-like views of the world, the perspective of aliens and monsters or the compulsive habits of an eavesdropper shouting out loud.

In his sculptural works, the artist makes physical some of his more curious and eccentric propositions by transforming found objects or by playing with their scale. Taking Lewis Carroll's perspective of Wonderland, Shrigley enlarges objects and imbues them with silly proportions. In recent works pet carriers, tents and sleeping bags have been filled with expanding foam filler - a building material which grows out of control, giving the artist little or no influence over the outcome. These shelters appear to be uninhabited suggesting that a major toxic disaster has occurred. Death and destruction are ever-present in Shrigley's work. In this exhibition the artist develops this preoccupation by presenting a dead kitten, stuffed and shown standing erect on its hind legs in protest.

David Shrigley's art frequently asks questions about the nature of contemporary art and its audience. He parodies the excessive and ridiculous aspects of the culture market and his rapidly executed and sometimes crudely made art suggest a compulsive desire to exploit and question the logic of contemporary art. Expressed in an extensive and expanding range of media, David Shrigley consistently seeks to widen his public. Operating frequently outside the gallery sphere, the artist disseminates his ideas in his weekly contribution to *The Guardian*, prolific publishing projects, collaborations with musicians and an interactive website.

Recent Shrigley projects include the newly released album - 'Worried Noodles' (Tom Lab, 2007) where musicians interpret his writings as lyrics, including collaborations by David Byrne, Hot Chip and Franz Ferdinand. His latest artist's book is entitled 'Ants Have Sex in Your Beer', published by Redstone Press in 2007.

David Shrigley has exhibited widely in the UK and around the world. His work is currently on view in *To The Wall*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, Colorado (through December 2007) and *Cult Fiction*, Hayward Gallery touring exhibition, travelling to various venues within the UK (2007/2008). Forthcoming solo presentations will be held at Centre d'Art Santa Monica, Barcelona, Spain (2008) and BAWAG Foundation, Vienna, Austria (2008). Recent solo exhibitions include Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, Sweden (2007); Centro de Arte Caja de Burgos, Burgos, Spain (2007) and Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, Scotland (2006). Recent group exhibitions include *Learn to Read*, Tate Modern, London, UK (2007); *Momentary Momentum*, Parasol unit foundation for contemporary art, London, UK (2007) and *Under Gods Hammer: William Blake versus David Shrigley*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, WA (2006).

Stephen Friedman Gallery will be participating in Art Basel Miami Beach, 6 – 9 December 2007, stand B9
The gallery will be closed to the public for the holidays from 21 December 2007 to 2 January 2008
Forthcoming exhibition: **Wayne Gonzales**, 1 February – 1 March 2007

Gallery hours are: Tuesday to Friday, 10am-6pm and Saturday 11am-5pm
For further details please contact Hanne Tonger-Erk on +44 20 7494 1434