

# KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013

## **WAITING GROUND**

**JULY 14- AUGUST 17, 2011**

**OPENING THURSDAY, JULY 14<sup>TH</sup> FROM 6 - 8 PM;**

**PERFORMANCE BY THE ICE MACHINE AND SWIFT AT HOME SWEET HOME, 9 PM**

**ORGANIZED BY HEATHER ROWE AND TOMMY WHITE**

**JON CONNER, MICHELLE ELZAY, TORY FAIR, JOHN GUTHRIE, KARA HAMILTON, NICK HERMAN, ZAK KITNICK, ESTHER KLÄS, CAMERON MARTIN, MEDRIE MACPHEE, JEFFRY MITCHELL, CHRIS MOTTALINI, GEORGE RUSH AND SHANNON SMITH**

**ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE WITH TEXT BY KEVIN ZUCKER AVAILABLE AT [WWW.LULU.COM](http://WWW.LULU.COM)**

THE WORKS OF THE FOURTEEN ARTISTS IN *WAITING GROUND* BUILD ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROTAGONIST OF J.G. BALLARD'S 1974 NOVEL *CONCRETE ISLAND*. ARCHITECT ROBERT MAITLAND FINDS HIMSELF STRANDED ON A TRAFFIC ISLAND BETWEEN THREE CONVERGING MOTORWAY ROUTES AFTER HIS JAGUAR CRASHES THROUGH A SAFETY BARRIER. AS TIME PASSES HE BECOMES LESS INCLINED TO ATTEMPT ESCAPE FROM THE "ISLAND," WHICH COMES TO CLOSELY REFLECT HIS STATE OF MIND. READING THE BOOK, IT IS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE WHAT OF HIS ABSURD PREDICAMENT IS REAL AND WHAT IS IMAGINED. MAITLAND'S ACCEPTANCE OF HIS FATE COULD BE A RATIONAL RESPONSE TO HIS SITUATION OR EVIDENCE THAT HE IS LOSING HIS MIND.

BALLARD ASKS TO PLACE THE READER IN MAITLAND'S POSITION, STRIPPED OF THE TRAPPINGS OF SOCIETY WHILE STILL ENMESHED IN ITS INFRASTRUCTURE. THE ARTWORKS IN THIS SHOW CONTINUE TO EXPLORE QUESTIONS FROM THE NOVEL, ADDRESSING CHANGES IN PERCEPTION AND MEANING OF THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE. THEY ALLUDE TO WHAT IS LOST AND WHAT REMAINS FROM A PREVIOUS LIFE:

THE HOUSE IS AT ONCE GROUNDED AND ETHEREAL, AND ON BRIGHT DAYS THIN BEAMS OF NATURAL LIGHT PLAY OFF THE WALLS THROUGH A SERIES OF NARROW FLOOR-TO-CEILING WINDOWS SPACED AT UNEVEN INTERVALS, WHICH SCHOLZ REFERS TO AS "BALISTRARIA" AFTER THE ARCHERS' SLITS FOUND IN THE WALLS OF MEDIEVAL CASTLES. THE SENSE OF FORTIFICATION IS NO ACCIDENT. THE HOUSE SITS ON FIVE ACRES, AND ONE OF THE GOALS IN DESIGNING THE HOUSE WAS TO CREATE A SANCTUARY FOR THE MAITLANDS. "I WANTED IT TO BE AN OASIS, A PLACE WHERE IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ESCAPE FROM THE DEMANDS OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD," SAYS DAVID MAITLAND, FOUNDER OF THE HEDGE FUND ISLAND CAPITAL. "WHEN THE HOUSE WAS FINISHED, MY IDENTIFICATION WITH IT WAS VERY STRONG, ALMOST PHYSICAL."

"YOU KNOW, DESPITE MY BACKGROUND," HE CONTINUES, "I ACTUALLY KNOW RATHER LITTLE ABOUT ARCHITECTURE." DAVID'S FATHER WAS BRITISH ARCHITECT ROBERT MAITLAND, WHOSE DISAPPEARANCE WAS THE SUBJECT OF A 1974 WORK OF SPECULATIVE FICTION BY BRITISH AUTHOR J.G. BALLARD, A BOOK NOW SLATED TO BECOME A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE STARRING CHRISTIAN BALE. "BECAUSE THE THING WITH MY FATHER HAPPENED WHEN I WAS QUITE YOUNG, I'VE TENDED TO SEE BUILDING AS AN ESOTERIC PURSUIT, BUT WHEN WE STARTED TALKING ABOUT THE HOUSE, PAMELA AND NIKLAS GOT ME EXCITED ABOUT ITS SHAPES AS A METAPHOR FOR THE MOVEMENTS OF MARKETS, THE GLOBAL FLOW OF CAPITAL AND INFORMATION THROUGH SPACE AND TIME."...

PEOPLE OFTEN ASK ABOUT THE HOUSE'S LIVABILITY, BUT PAMELA INSISTS THAT DETAILS LIKE THE EMPHASIS ON SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND THE STATE OF THE ART AUTOMATED LIGHTING, TEMPERATURE CONTROL, SECURITY AND HOME ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEMS MAKE SCHOLZ'S CREATION (WHICH HE EXCITEDLY CALLS A "PAVILION OF RUST") A WORK OF ART THAT IS MEANT TO BE LIVED IN. 'WE HAD TO WORK WITH NIKLAS TO TAKE SOME OF THE EDGES OFF IN PLACES LIKE THE NURSERY AND THE FAMILY ROOM. WE WANTED A DYSTOPIAN FANTASIA," SHE LAUGHS, "BUT ONE WE COULD FEEL GOOD ABOUT RAISING [THE COUPLE'S SIXTEEN-MONTH-OLD DAUGHTER] ELLA IN."

—KEVIN ZUCKER, 'CONCRETE ISLAND', *WAITING GROUND* CATALOGUE, 2011

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