

Campagnola, Sonia, *Flash Reviews: Georg Herold*, *Flash Art*, May-June 2009, p. 129 (ill.)

GEORG HEROLD FRIEDRICH PETZEL GALLERY - NEW YORK



GEORG HEROLD, installation view at Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York 2009.

Georg Herold's second solo show at Petzel develops through three different chapters; preamble, act and conclusion.

In the entrance, six black-and-white photographs of a human body twisted in the effort to put his feet into his mouth plunk you into a fictitious '70s-style study of body politics and identity: a six-station pilgrimage prank meditating upon the rolling up and eating of oneself.

In the main room two big figures of wooden laths are covered with stretched canvas. One, pink, is in a sexy pose, stretching and arching against a wall; the other, orange, is leaning on a pilaster with a leg up. They are both droll and

dramatic. They share the space with six sculptures realized with wooden laths screwed together: rough figures in haughty, riotous or crude gestures. One kneels as if praying; another crawls like a beggar with one leg missing; another grips his sex with a boxing glove. With caustic humor, they advocate shame, violence, punishment, repression. The third room is the revelation: three witty self-portraits of the artist maneuvering an Escher-like cubic shape allude at the same time to Gestalt theories, magic tricks and Minimalist aesthetics. A sculpture at the center of the room — a broken apart cube profile — is their ultimate archetype. Supposedly gifted with special powers, the artist mocks his demiurgic artifice.

Desire and guilt, rebellion against good taste and compulsive adherence to the norm are the threads that Herold delivers with his usual sardonic critique; deadpan but with a cutting jest. Dramatic, not tragic.

Sonia Campagnola