



Open Source Gallery, Inc - 501(c)(3) Organization
306 17th street, Brooklyn, NY 11215, contact@opensourcegallery.org 646 279 3969 opensourcegallery.org
Gallery Hours: Wednesday - Saturday: 2pm - 7pm

CRISTIAN BORS & MARIUS RITIU: VENUS VON HAMBURG

September 3 – 28, 2015

Artist Reception: September 12, 7-9 pm

Bors & Ritiu is an artist duo that delights in using methods of appropriation and overidentification, criticizing the art market with a whiff of humour and wit that goes well beyond a postmodern sense of irony. In this sense, their work comes close to an artistic form of activism, a kind of avant-garde in disguise, refusing to communicate a straight-forward, overtly political message. (There is no programme). As visual artists, they are implying themselves in their own critique, as if they were characters in their own story. (Do you read me?) Bors & Ritiu use their twin personality and accompanying avatars as a means to install an ambiguity, bending an appropriated imagery back on itself, short-circuiting it in a way. (A strange loop). This is how they typically tend to frustrate the viewers' desire, projecting their expectations back onto them like a boomerang. — Pieter Vermeulen, September 2013



Cristian Bors & Marius Ritiu present *Venus von Hamburg*, an installation at Open Source Gallery that explores politics, heritage, and the economy.

While wars in the past have been fought with weapons, it has been said that WWII will be fought with the banking system. If this is true, we are at a turning point that could see politics allow for the colonization of nations by those who hold them in debt. *Venus von Hamburg* represents an immediate response to financial crises and inequalities that are reaching a breaking point in Europe and have prompted grassroots movements within both Europe and the United States. Within *Venus von Hamburg*, the great Greek beauty Venus de Milo is distorted and disfigured. Her fate is no longer controlled by her people, but her uncertain future has been dictated by politicians and executives.

Venus von Hamburg highlights the often overlooked humor and aesthetics within contemporary issues, conveying a politically-charged, yet ultimately objective image. Their goal is to present dichotomies—good/bad, moral/immoral, legal/illegal—allowing the audience to steer their own observations and conversations. Within their sculptural collage, Bors & Ritiu not only appropriate an historical image, but also rework one from a prior project of theirs, playing with how images can be used and re-used within ever-changing and ambiguous contexts. Exploring their own Romanian heritage and its relationship to the European Union, *Venus von Hamburg* represents an immediate response to crises within the financial system.

Cristian Bors & Marius Ritiu are a Belgium-based artist duo originally from Romania. They have exhibited extensively in Belgium at venues such as the Galerie Marion De Cannière, Verbeke Foundation and the Middelheim Museum. Bors & Ritiu have also participated in the Art Brussels Art Fair, Slick Art Fair, cutlog Art Fair, Trajector Art Fair, and the BORG Biennial. In 2011, they received the ARTE/cutlog Prize at the cutlog Art Fair in Paris. This is their first solo exhibition in the United States.