

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

MARNIE WEBER
THE TRUTH SPEAKERS, THE SEA OF SILENCE

4 SEPTEMBER – 7 OCTOBER 2009

OPENING: THURSDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 2009, 6 – 8 PM



Simon Lee Gallery is proud to announce its forthcoming exhibition *Marnie Weber: The Truth Speakers, The Sea of Silence*. This will be the gallery's first solo show of Marnie Weber, an LA based artist and musician. This multifaceted exhibition of film, sculpture and collage will immerse the viewer in the uncanny world of Weber's imagination. The central focus of the show will be the new film, *The Sea of Silence*, which marks the third chapter of The Spirit Girls films. In this modern day fable the girls play out narratives of passion and transformation in their endeavour for spiritual enlightenment.

The previous films *Songs that Never Die*, (2005) and *A Western Song*, (2007) introduced The Spirit Girls, an all female band that tragically and prematurely died in the 1970s. The films follow the girls, who were rendered mute through death, in their travels through a concurrently sinister and fanciful limbo. This world of exaggerated colour contains incongruous references that span western art to popular culture to create a realm unfixed in time. These dream-like narratives are instantly accessible but upon reflection demand further contemplation due to the artist's fusion of the profound and the whimsical.

In Weber's latest film, *The Sea of Silence*, the Spirit Girls seek out The Truth Speakers, a group of ventriloquist dolls through whom they hope to convey their message to a mass audience. When given a voice The Spirit Girls intermix profound philosophical observations on truth, beauty and the nature of silence with crass "man walks into the bar" jokes. The performance references ventriloquism in its past and present forms, as both a form of entertainment and an act of witchcraft. The Spirit Girls' new ability to articulate both empowers and corrupts them as they proceed to cavort with the animal audience. This performance is reminiscent of the infamous 19th Century Fox Sisters, young entertainers renowned for communicating with the afterlife through sexually explicit performances. The chaos that unfolds in the film demonstrates the purity and significance of silence.

Sculptures and collages of the Spirit Girls, the Truth Speakers and their animal cohorts provide a textural landscape that firmly establishes the relationships between Weber's characters. The materiality of these works constructs links to The Spirit Girls world; for these works are more than representations they are relics that carry the emotional complexities that are rife within The Spirit Girls ethereal world.

Marnie Weber studied at the University of California, Los Angeles, receiving her B.A in 1981. She works and lives in Los Angeles, a city whose culture continues to impact on her work. She has exhibited widely internationally and had numerous solo public shows, the most recent being *From the Dust Room*, Luckman Gallery at California State University in Los Angeles. Weber has also contributed to many group shows, the most current is the *Sonic Youth etc.: Sensational Fix* exhibition at Malmö Konsthall, Sweden which runs until 20th September 2009. Her work is held in prestigious public collections such as Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles and FRAC in Paris. As well as being an artist Weber also has a significant musical career, originally part of the LA band *Party Boys* she has subsequently released countless solo albums. Most recently Marnie Weber has formed the band The Spirit Girls, characters that feature in her latest films. The band, in which Weber is the lead vocalist, performs regularly at venues such as the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles.

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