



Innocent I, Acrylic yarn, fiberfill, styrofoam, wood, plastic; crochet (Detail)

CHILD'S PLAY

A SOLO EXHIBITION BY PATRICIA WALLER

November 14, 2024 - February 1, 2025

Child's Play is the first solo exhibition by Berlin-based artist Patricia Waller at C24 Gallery. The show displays the myriad ways that Waller explores how violence is woven into the fabric of modern culture, particularly as it impacts children and animals. Her crocheted figures combine elements of cartoon-like innocence with sinister undertones and graphic depictions of both accidental and purposeful injury. The juxtaposition of these contrasting elements conjures both humor and horror, awakening the senses of viewers to profound effect.

In this collection, we bring together work that explores violence on a number of different levels. First there is the overt imagery of children who have suffered the cruelties of war and its associated atrocities. The animals that appear in Waller's work represent our relationship to and understanding of nature. Works from the *Happy Gardening* series explore the hierarchy of value we place on living creatures, from beloved pets to animals we kill for food, to unwanted household or garden pests that we dispose of with

cruelty. Behind the pieces assembled in *Strange Desires* is an investigation of socially accepted desires and taboos, hidden imagination, and secrets about domination, humiliation and temptation.

The title, *Child's Play* connotes something simple and easy to do, guided by imagination more than by fixed rules. While Waller's crocheted works may seem to trivialize their subjects, the harmlessness with which the handicrafts present themselves makes the themes they deal with appear all the more blatant and cynical. The ambiguous works raise uncomfortable questions about how we deal with the various forms of violence in our society: the violence to which we are exposed, which we perpetrate ourselves and which we consume with relish. In so doing, she encourages us to reconsider how we deal with our fears and our ability to address or repress them.

We look forward to sharing this provocative body of work that upends expectations about a familiar medium, as it encourages us to explore challenging territory.

MORE ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Berlin-based artist Patricia Waller is well known for her colorful crocheted works that deliver serious messages about violence and abuse via a medium that is more commonly associated with comfort. Chilean-born Waller has made a decades-long career of responding to the growing acceptance of violence in the world as well as satirizing and playing with cultural mythologies and norms.

Confronting bloody realities with a vicious sense of irony, Waller creates handcrafted wool objects that play with well known symbols of innocence, causing us to reconsider how we deal with our fears and our ability to address or repress them. By subverting traditional uses of a familiar material, her bold and graphic work serves as a wake up call to re-examine a pervasive imbalance in our collective psyche. In other works, she applies her dark brand of humor to topics ranging from superheroes, fairy tales and cartoon characters to circus performers, magicians, and animal abuse.

Patricia Waller has been widely exhibited throughout Germany and also in China, Spain, Austria, the Netherlands and more recently here at C24 Gallery in last year's group exhibition, *Conflicted*. She is represented in Europe by Galerie Deschler, Berlin.