

Ronald Feldman Fine Arts

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PANAMARENKO

MAY 7 – JUNE 11

Above all, they [Panamarenko's works] seem to exist as subtly humorous but thoroughly purposeful inventions which use technology – from old to new, primitive to highly sophisticated – as a means of revitalizing aesthetic experience.

Jon Thompson, *Bing of the Ferro Lusto*, Hayward Gallery Catalogue

The Feldman Gallery will exhibit works from 1984 to 2004 by Panamarenko, the acclaimed Belgian artist, whose aerodynamic machines, based on the principles of physics and quantum mechanics, are infrequently seen in New York. The exhibition includes prototypes and models from several series of sculptures/machines that traverse the air, the earth, and outer space; theoretical drawings and screenprints on canvas; and a series of prints that depict iconic Panamarenko images.

Panamarenko creates aesthetic inventions rather than representations, maintaining that “the reality of an object is more convincing than any image that follows it, whether a sculpture or a drawing.” Integrating science, art, the mechanical, and the organic, he explores themes of flight and freedom from gravity. His quasi-functional machines, situated between the absurd and the purposeful, are a means to experience the essence of his underlying theories and, paradoxically, suggest both the possibility and impossibility of flight. Technologically complex and fantastical, his inventions question the perimeters of the known and the imaginable.

The exhibition features *Brazil* (2004), a 750-pound bronze “pilot” and engine, with a 20-foot wingspan, inspired by the appearance of a flying man in the film, *Brazil*. *Umbilly V* (1984), which resembles an over-sized mosquito at rest, is based on the aerodynamics of insect flight. *Rucksack* (1984) uses a lightweight power pack, worn like a backpack, to allow a highly individualized form of flight. *Archaeopterix III* (1990) has an array of mechanical and technological gadgetry that simulates the hypothesized attempts of a pre-Jurassic bird to fly. *Hinky Pinky Prova* (2004), a model of a steam and turbine car, can attain high speeds. With cosmic ambition, *Bing II* (2003) is seen as a working model for a spaceship, with specially designed motors, and *Vliegend Eiland* imagines a floating island that hovers above the earth.

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In New York, Panamarenko exhibited at the Dia Center for the Arts in 2001 and the Feldman Gallery in 1993. Recent solo exhibitions have been mounted by the following museums: the Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterloo (Holland); Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; Hayward Gallery, London; and Museum Jean Tinguely, Basel. In September 2005 the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Brussels will present a retrospective of his work.

There will be a reception for the artist on Saturday, May 7: 6 – 8. Gallery hours are Tuesday – Saturday, 10 – 6. Mondays by appointment. The gallery will be closed Memorial Day weekend. For more information, please contact Laura Muggeo at (212) 226-3232 or laura@feldmangallery.com.