

## ANCIENT & MODERN

### PRESS RELEASE

**PETER LINDE BUSK**

**5 JULY - 11 AUGUST 2007**

Preview Wednesday 4 July, 6-8pm

Late opening Thursday 5 July until 9pm

Ancient & Modern presents new paintings, collages and etchings by Peter Linde Busk.

In Albrecht Dürer's *Melancholia I* (1514), a winged, seated figure waits, pen in hand, for some form of inspiration. Melancholia is depicted as a creative force. The Greeks thought that to be melancholic was not to be mentally or pathologically ill, but was bound up with disappointment, dejection and despondency - feelings that lie at the heart of the human condition, often instigated by a sense of failure.

Danish artist Peter Linde Busk, in his first solo exhibition in London, gives form to 'melancholia', a figure in his paintings whose origins lie in the King of Hearts. The King, traditionally depicted on playing cards as appearing to plunge a sword into his own head, is sometimes referred to as the 'Suicide King'. Busk's work often relates to the fallen anti-hero and tragic figure in fiction, from Don Quixote to Hamlet. The atmosphere he creates in his work aspires to what he has described as "a compelling feeling of strangeness" and recalls the expressive, thick, hard, brushstrokes that outlined the dark, contoured figures, bleak landscapes and stained glass of Georges Rouault (1871 - 1958),

Melancholia, from the time of Hippocrates up until the 19th century, was thought of as black bile coursing through ones veins, a fluid that thickens like the dregs of wine. Melancholia later became associated with madness. Since the mentally ill were also thought to be free of societal constraints, and in contact with the spiritual world, the artwork they produced was seen as the most authentic, pure and honest form of visual expression.

In 1921, the German psychiatrist Hans Prinzhorn published 'Artistry of the Mentally Ill', a study of over 4,500 works he oversaw at the Heidelberg Psychiatric Clinic in Germany. In them, Prinzhorn identified six key 'tendencies' he thought were

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fundamental to all picture making: The Urge to Play, The Ornamental Urge, The Ordering Tendency, The Tendency to Imitate and the Need for Symbols. He suggested that in every human being there was "a tendency, a compulsion, a need for the expression of the psyche".

Peter Linde Busk applies all six of Prinzhorn's 'tendencies' to different effect in his own works, creating "the construction of a pictorial scaffold on which to arrange the rubble of formal elements".

*Peter Linde Busk (b.1974 Copenhagen) lives in London and is currently undertaking a Postgraduate Diploma in Fine Art at The Royal Academy Schools, having studied for a BA at The Slade School, UCL from where he completed a semester at Hunter College of Art, New York. He held a solo exhibition, 'Come at the King, You Best Not Miss', at Galleri Christina Wilson, Copenhagen in 2006.*

ANCIENT & MODERN is directed by Bruce Haines and Rob Tufnell.

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Exhibition open: Thursday - Saturday 12 - 6pm and by appointment.



Peter Linde Busk, *Untitled*, 2007, aquatint on paper, 29.5 x 25cm

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