

Simon Hollington: The Outward Urge

The Smithfield Gallery, 16 West Smithfield, London EC1A 9HQ

14th October – 7th November 2009

Private View: 13th October 6-9pm



Simon Hollington presents a solo exhibition of drawing at The Smithfield Gallery, London from 14th October to 7th November 2009.

These drawings depict the first earthlings ever to venture into space. Taken from contemporary documentation, they employ the backdrop of early space exploration to observe our difficult relationship with the animals that are mans nearest biological relatives.

For many, the conquest of space is still seen as the pinnacle of human achievement with 2009 marking the fortieth anniversary of mans historic landing on the moon. However, Hollington reminds us that outer space was experienced for the first time by a hominid (or great ape) on January 31, 1961, when Chimp 65 made a flight lasting 16 minutes and 39 seconds. When he returned alive he was renamed HAM and became an overnight media sensation.

HAM has been called 'The first American in outer space', event though HAM was born and captured in Cameroon. HAM has also been called 'the first astronaut' as he was not only a passenger, but also carried out basic operations he was trained for.

In these startling realistic drawings, Hollington reminds us that these earthlings went into space before humans, scientifically and culturally paving the way for manned space flight. In many ways, it may be said that they are the ones that defined the 20th century. The subject matter moves from extreme sentimentality to dark, questionably abusive scenes of human-animal interaction, leaving the viewer to judge the ethical and scientific significance of these first ever space explorers.

For more information and images: www.electronicsunset.org

Further press information:

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Opening hours: 10-6pm Monday to Saturday

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