



## Mark Dion

### RECONNAISSANCE

April 22 – June 20, 2016

For his first solo show at Waldburger Wouters in Brussels, Mark Dion transformed the gallery space. He created a new space within the gallery, separated by a black curtain. Behind the curtain, in a sort of a curiosity cabinet or wunderkammer, in darkness, 16 extraordinary objects are spread out on a long table and glow with fluorescent green light. The objects look very archaic and include, just to name some, Neanderthal skull, starfish, microscope, mammoth skeleton and the body of a fish. Outside this darkened area, in the front part of the gallery, Mark Dion installed two metal tubs and a glass dome. One of the metal tubs holds a penguin, the other one a polar bear. Both of these popular figures, one in ceramic and one plush, have been embedded in thick tar. In the glass dome stands a coral-like figure. In the tubs - as well as in the glass dome - Mark Dion placed countless paraphernalia; old watches, pocket knives, compasses, old photographs and so on. Finally, just next to the entrance, more than a twenty drawings are mounted and display images mainly related to nature and the history of nature sciences.

**Waldburger Wouters**

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Since the early 1990's Mark Dion has pursued his own scientific interests, but moreover, he is also re-examining traditional science while he investigates the ways in which dominant ideologies shape our understanding of history, knowledge, and the natural world. He appropriates traditional archaeological and other scientific methods of collecting, ordering and exhibiting objects and thereby addresses the distinction between scientific methods and subjective influences. Mark Dion questions the authoritative role of the classical science. In this context, he is further examining the largely destructive approach of mankind towards nature and locates the roots of the prevailing environmental politics and public policy in the construction of knowledge about nature.

Born in Massachusetts in 1961, Mark Dion currently lives in New York City with his wife, the artist Dana Sherwood. Throughout the past two decades, his work has been the subject of major exhibitions worldwide. Solo exhibitions include Mark Dion: Wayward Wilderness, at Marta Herfod (2015/2016); The Academy of Things at The Academy of Fine Arts Design in Dresden, Germany (2014); The Macabre Treasury at Museum Het Domein in Sittard, The Netherlands (2013); Oceanomania: Souvenirs of Mysterious Seas at Musée Océanographique de Monaco and Nouveau Musée National de Monaco/ Villa Paloma in Monaco (2011); The Marvelous Museum: A Mark Dion Project at Oakland Museum of California (2010-11); Systema Metropolis at Natural History Museum, London (2007); The South Florida Wildlife Rescue Unit at Miami Art Museum (2006); Rescue Archaeology, a project for the Museum of Modern Art (2004); and his renowned Tate Thames Dig at the Tate Gallery in London (1999). Mark Dion has been included in dOCUMENTA 13 (2012) and the 47<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale (1997, Nordic Pavilion) and he has been recently featured in an acclaimed offsite project at Casa de Tre Oci during the 56<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale (2015). Upcoming institutional solo shows in London, Switzerland and The Netherlands.

The work of Mark Dion can be found in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; MoMA in New York; and the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, among many others.