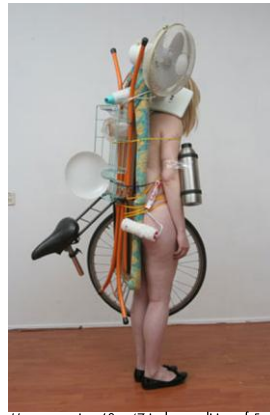


## Melanie Bonajo

### As Thrown Down From Heaven

May 14 – June 20, 2009

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 14, 6-8pm



Hanna, c-print, 60 x 47 inches, edition of 5



Kinga, c-print, 60 x 47 inches, edition of 5

**P·P·O·W** Gallery is pleased to announce our first solo exhibition of the Dutch artist, Melanie Bonajo. *As Thrown Down from Heaven*, is a photo series that focuses on a theme that Bonajo continually explores; the relationships that human beings have with the environment, both private and public, and the desire to create harmony within this. The images in this series combine seemingly opposing elements, nude figures with disposable objects, but when combined these figures become a fusion of the individual and the material, becoming a hybrid that expresses our modern age.

This series comes from elementary questions: what do we need to add to ourselves until we become complete, happy, satisfied or safe? Bonajo believes that our identification with material obsession blocks the ability for a deeper sensibility; this includes not only objects but also immaterial elements such as facts, information, data, and visual input. This fixation inevitably burdens the health of our spirit.

These photographs are Bonajo's exercises in confronting the impositions placed on material possession and the self. Through the photographs she is trying to sculpt a mental life, creating a space where silence can exist between us and objects. This space connects the logical with the intuitive, and allows us to retain a balance of our perceptions. Bonajo states, "We live in the human era...We are the architects of the human universe...We think that being able to reflect by reason sets us apart or above nature. But being a symptom of the earth, human beings are therefore bounded to the laws of Nature...Our psychic landscape is a reflection of our inside and shapes our external surroundings. This evidence in matter is a consequence of our thought system and a symbolic expression of our time."

There will be an exhibition catalog available, produced by Kodoji Press, Switzerland

**Melanie Bonajo** was born in Heerlen, The Netherlands in 1978. In 1998, she moved to Amsterdam and entered the Gerrit Rietveld Academy where she majored in Photography and Fine Arts. Her photographs have been exhibited in major art institutions internationally, such as Institute Neerlandais/Paris, Stedelijk Museum/ Amsterdam, SMBA/Amsterdam, Fons Welters/Amsterdam, Foam/Amsterdam, Fette Gallery/Los Angeles, Bongout Gallery/Berlin, Mad Vicky Tea Gallery/Paris, Modern Art Museum/Lublijana, Kohun Museum of Modern Art/Seoul, Photofestival Allepo/Syria. Bonajo was the winner of the Dutch Young Artist Award 2003, and winner of the Bookprice Pup Award 2007. Bonajo was nominated for the Hyeres Photo award 2009. Her work has been published in *Capricious*, *Foam-magazine*, *Livraison*, *Famous Magazine*, and *Mollusk*, among others. She currently is a resident at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam.



Special thanks to the Consulate-General of the Netherlands in New York for exhibition support.

Upcoming exhibition: *Image Search*, June 25- July 31, 2009- artists include: Aids-3D, Colleen Asper, Aleksandra Domanovic, Christoph Dreager, Daniel Everett, Oliver Laric, Jason Lazarus, Abigail Lloyd, James Schaeffer, Suzanne Treister, Conrad Ventur, Charlie White

Please call 212-647-1044 for additional information or photographic materials