

MARK ANSTEE

*Cruelty has a Human Heart
And Jealousy a Human Face
Terror the Human Form Divine,
And Secrecy the Human Dress.*

*The Human Dress is forged Iron,
The Human Form a fiery Forge,
The Human Face a Furnace seal'd,
The Human Heart its hungry Gorge.*

William Blake – A Divine Image

15 November – 12 January 2008
Private View 14 November 6-9

MADDER**139** is delighted to present an exhibition of new work by Mark Anstee. Invited to respond to the 250th anniversary of William Blake's birth, Anstee has chosen to convert the more familiar line of his characteristic figure drawing from ink pen to glass neon.

Over the past few years, Anstee has been commissioned to make monumental durational drawings in major institutions. These have developed as a form of memorial, albeit temporary, where thousands of tiny individual figures have been drawn live in front of the visiting public, accumulating over time to form a great mass before their eventual deletion and destruction. The figures are derived from many influences; classical paintings, tomb sculptures, war photography, and have been largely concentrated around the figure in extremis. Anstee is fascinated by the moment of decision, to do or die, or the moment of indecision, the overwhelming of the individual by choice and the onset of the catatonic state. Most of his figures are drawn about face, turned away from the viewer, the classical 'rucken figure'.

The new works are individual drawings rendered in hand blown Venetian Murano glass. The subject, the 'Hoodie' shies away from us but draws attention to himself, glowing in a vibrant green, the colour of nature, of camouflage, of Kryptonite. The figures take different positions or poses that could be separate moments, frozen states in a continual movement. Is he falling? Is he struggling to stand? Or is he dancing? Are we witnesses to agony or ecstasy? With these child-sized hooded apparitions, Anstee continues to explore the line between perceptions and prejudices and what may be another kind of reality.

Mark Anstee was born in Bedfordshire, England in 1964. Anstee studied at Goldsmith's College, London, BA Fine Art (1983-84), Human Anatomy for the Artist at University College Hospital, London (1984), Performing Arts at Central School of Speech and Drama, London (1985-88) and MA Fine Art at the University of Brighton (1997-99).

Anstee's live drawings have been witnessed at the *De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill (2006)*, *Fabrica, Brighton (2005)*, the *IMMA, Dublin (2005)* and the *In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres (2003)*. For the *2008 Capital of Culture*, Anstee has been invited to make a piece for the *Bluecoat, Liverpool*. The show at MADDER**139** is Anstee's first solo show in a commercial gallery in the UK. If you would like to visit Blake's grave it is 250 steps from MADDER**139's** door in Bunhill Fields.

Open Wednesday Thursday Friday 12–6 Saturday 12–5
Nearest tube Old Street or Barbican

