

Liane Lang: *An Idle Brain Is Satan's Shoppe*
17th March – 17th June 2014
at House of St Barnabas, London

Marcelle Joseph Projects proudly presents a new series of photographs by London-based artist Liane Lang created at Casa Guidi in Florence, the erstwhile home of Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Robert Browning, two of England's most prominent Victorian poets. In these rooms, the Brownings wrote some of their finest poetry, and "Casa Guidi" was the name given to the apartment by Elizabeth herself. The apartment is now a museum and attempts to recreate as closely as possible the living quarters, furniture and artwork as they were when the Brownings lived there from 1847 until 1861. The museological semblance in these photographic images creates an uncanny atmosphere, presence and absence filling the rooms in equal measure. Lang has created a figure, using her signature life-cast sculptural techniques, dressed up as Elizabeth, which she poses in the rooms like a ghostly visitation from the past.

Although Elizabeth is pictured alone in each of Lang's works in the exhibition, it is important to note another absent soul in these Florentine rooms, that of Robert Browning, the person who gave Elizabeth - a sickly invalid whose father refused to allow her to travel or to marry - Italy, travel, experience and romantic love. Their courtship and marriage is considered one of the greatest love stories in English history. At thirty-eight years old, Elizabeth received an audacious letter from Robert Browning admiring her poetry. This fabled letter-writing courtship continued until they married secretly in England and moved to Italy in the dead of night. The titles of the works in this series as well as the exhibition title are lines taken from Elizabeth's poems. Lang's work is concerned with notions of animacy, which she investigates through sculpture, photography and video works. Many of Lang's works examine museum objects and the biographies they attempt to narrate, modes of display and the verisimilitude of art objects, particularly figurative sculptures and political monuments.

Liane Lang (born in Germany) is a London-based artist who studied at the National College of Art and Design in Dublin and completed a BA in Fine Art at Goldsmiths College, London followed by a Postgraduate Diploma at the Royal Academy Schools, London, where she graduated in 2006. Recent projects have included residencies in Budapest, Hungary (2009) and Riga, Latvia (2010), where the artist used photography and animation to stage interventions with monuments from the Socialist era. Lang has completed other residencies in New York (2013), Provence (2012) and Berlin (2014). She has exhibited widely both in the UK and abroad and her work is held in a number of prominent collections, including, among others, the collections of Deutsche Bank, Royal Academy of Art, White Cube, Ernst & Young, Arts Council Of England, Saatchi Gallery and Kunstverein Bregenz in Austria. Lang's solo exhibitions include, among others, those at Rosenberg Gallery, Hofstra University, New York (2013); Art First Projects, London (2013); WW Gallery, London (2011); KvH Projects, London (2010), Squid/Tabernacle, London (2010); Supernova Gallery, Riga (2010); and Kunstverein Heidelberg (2007). Selected group shows include Focal Point Gallery, Southend (2012); WW Gallery at the Venice Biennale (2011); *Flaming July*, Leighton House Museum, London (2010); *ArtFutures*, Bloomberg Space, London (2007); *Go-Between*, Kunstverein Bregenz, Austria (2005); *Sesiones Animadas*, Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid (2005); 2002 Liverpool Biennial; *Animations*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Centre, New York (2001); and *New Labour*, Saatchi Gallery, London (2001). Lang was awarded the Hotshoe Magazine Photography Prize (2012); the Selina Cheneviere Fellowship and Hugh Merrell Dissertation Award in 2006; the Henry Moore Foundation Production Award and Lynn Painter Stainers Award in 2005; the London Arts Board Production Award (2002); and the Tooth Travel Award (2001). Later this year, Lang will undertake a residential fellowship at the Bogliasco Foundation's study centre in Liguria, Italy.