



## Press release

### Galerie Fons Welters

**3 November– 24 November 2012**

Opening: Saturday 3 November, 5-7 pm

Opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 1-6 pm

### *Elephant in the Room*

Galerie Fons Welters is proud to invite you to the group exhibition 'Elephant in the Room' curated by Louise Schouwenberg. The exhibition includes works by recently graduated designers from the Design Academy in Eindhoven and a series of works by Bertjan Pot.

Pieces of furniture? Utensils? The 'things' in the exhibition 'Elephant in the Room' are located in the gray area between utility and meaning. They refer to a basic use, yet they are above all strange creatures who won't disappear in their servile functionality, as is usually expected from utensils.

They are old, ancient even. They refer to their archetypes, and to the meanings they've gathered over time. These layers of meaning reach far beyond the everyday use. Cultural and social differences, prevailing ideas about taste, aesthetics and morality; things tell us something about the era and context in which they were born, but also the times in which we (re)assign value to them.

Many artists involve existing objects in their work to play with their emotional and symbolic connotations. The ever intended functionality plays only a marginal role as an idea. For designers, this balance is usually different, even though it is a very subtle difference. Designers work consciously with both connotations and denotations, the concrete, functional significance of their products. Regardless of their products actually 'functioning', the bigger stories gain substance primarily within the margins of a functional setting.

This time, a different setting has been consciously sought. Within the context of the visual arts, these peculiar 'Elephants in the Room' share something essential about the relationship people have with things that surround them in daily life.

[guest curator Louise Schouwenberg]

In her work, **Alicia Ongay Perez** questions both the functional essence of existing objects, and their iconic, sculptural and symbolic meaning. How do these aspects relate to each other within the closed world of design, and what is their role in the outside world? The indefinable objects of **Mathieu Frossard** leave room for interpretation, both regarding their beauty and meaning, and their user value. The cabinet composed of small pieces of steel pipe by **Tuomas Tolvanen**, recalls not only the burned cabinet that served as a mold, but also the human condition, which is far from perfect but rather extremely fragile - a reality that is usually denied in the perfect world of contemporary design. **Bertjan Pot's** masks are blindly staring at the objects that are not what they seem. **Tamar Shafir** and **Louise Schouwenberg** edited the designers' text fragments and wrote new lines in which they address the tension between the connotations and denotations of utensils.

*\*'elephant in the room' is a metaphor for an unavoidable truth that is usually being ignored.*