



Press release

Galerie Fons Welters

13 March – 24 April 2010

Opening: Saturday 8 September, 17:00 – 19:00

Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 13:00 – 18:00

Maria Roosen

BLOW

The glass shapes bend elegantly over the blackened tree-trunks, as if gravity is stretching them even further, elongating them. The light that plays over the shapes shows their translucence, shows the breath, the life, that lies concealed within them. The fleshy red of their outer skin, the lines evocative of veins, muscles, and other animal innards, have the quality of life that has just ended, and is beating or pumping for the last time. The dangling organ-like shapes recall drawings from the series 'Desastres de la Guerra' by Francisco de Goya (1746-1828). And yet **Maria Roosen's** sculptures are primarily voluptuous and feminine. They conceal within them a startling beauty.

Maria Roosen's new sculptures are shaped from, and in collaboration with, the tree-trunks. They are the interaction between glass and tree. Trees have always served as key vehicles of expression in this artist's work: examples include the glass breasts adorning the trees in 'Spiegelborsten aan de Pruimenboom' ('Mirror breasts on plum tree'; 1996), the penises attached to trees in 'Jean, Pierre et Claude dans la forêt' (2004) and the tree trunks with fungi in 'Gewassen Bomen' ('Washed trees'; 2006). But this time the tree actually becomes part of the creative process. The glass is blown directly around the tree, in a procedure that **Maria Roosen** has used before, by blowing glass in sandals, wooden shoes, and lederhosen. Watercolour remains a source, from within which Roosen explores 'that which is impossible in reality' in a medium that, like glass, has a fluid mass.

The wood that comes into being with the diverse tree trunks in the exhibition space is reminiscent of the magical world of *Alice in Wonderland*. Here too, time is disjointed and distorted, literally dangling from a branch; a lost garment is draped over the blackened wood; jugs hang like buds; and small white hands crawl over the stems like snowflakes. Standing in the middle of the wood is a table on which a crocheted cloth has taken root like a creeper. All this is surrounded by the colourful watercolours which in themselves open up a marvellous world.

Maria Roosen's works are produced by what is given – natural elements, such as trees and the effect of the material, glass – and what she adds as an artist – human elements, manipulation, and imagination. The resulting interaction, between the givens, influence, and spontaneity, comes into play in **Maria Roosen's** works as soon as the glass-blower fills them with breath, by *blowing*.

[Laura van Grinsven]