

Claudia Wieser: Chapter
March 1 – April 14, 2018

Thallus: “Everyone is an actor in Rome. The theater isn’t what it was.”
Aristarchus: “No, and I’ll tell you something else. It never was, what it was.”
I, Claudius by Robert Graves, 1976 BBC adaptation

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to present Claudia Wieser’s *Chapter*, the Berlin-based artist’s second solo exhibition with the gallery. Drawing inspiration from the BBC Television series “I, Claudius” (1976), Wieser transforms the gallery’s white box into an arena where history, artifice and social constructs collide. Wieser’s practice derives from the distinct, but interrelated realms of fine art, architecture, design, and film. These elements are united by Wieser’s engagement with geometric patterning as a means of abstraction and a manifestation of spirit, psychic space and the subconscious. The exhibition highlights Wieser’s adept ability to create an experiential environment through a reductive vocabulary of composite wallpaper, ornamented woodwork, gilded drawings, hand-painted tiles, and multifaceted mirrors.

Robert Graves’ novels “I, Claudius” and “Claudius, The God,” are told from the title character’s perspective in a time of prosperity and intrigue in imperial Rome when power and insanity reigned in equal parts. Set during a period when divinity or other characteristics were conveyed through visual tropes, the intentionally anachronistic 1976 BBC adaptation provides fertile ground for a range of explorations, from aesthetic inquiry and play to its uncanny prescience to contemporary social and political dialogues. Images drawn from the series are fragmented and recombined with those from other real-life contexts to create composite wallpaper installed on three of the four gallery walls. Characters, historic and powerful, shift in and out of focus and are viewed through the different lenses and perspectives of past and present setting the first scene of *Chapter*.

Against the backdrop of Wieser’s wallpaper, there are three tiled plinths that function as monoliths as well as stages populated with groups of wooden sculptures. For Wieser, the varying shapes and sizes of the sculptures are indicative of their personalities, like a family constellation—restrained, robust, refined. She distinctly adorns each by hand further emphasizing their individual characteristics. This gathering of characters, of which the viewer becomes one, is reflected back by mirrors, copper and other metal-leafed works installed in the scenography. Here, as in a movie, what is real and imagined is indiscernible and the span of time is skimmed, cropped, and erased. The individual chapters of a life or a story are conflated with memory and perception. Guided by Wieser’s meticulous hand, the scene provokes questions about the relationships between these elements inviting viewers to create their own associations and narratives.

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Claudia Wieser was born in Freilassing, Germany in 1973. Following an apprenticeship as a blacksmith, Wieser studied at the Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, Germany. She has exhibited worldwide at institutions including The Drawing Center, New York, NY, Kunsthalle Nuremberg, Nuremberg, Germany, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Stuttgart, Germany, Museo d’Arte Contemporanea, Villa Croce, Genoa, Italy, and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, St. Louis, MO. She will be included in the group exhibition *Hinge Picture, Memory Images* at the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, LA on view March 14 – June 13, 2018. Opening in February 2019, she will be the subject of a solo exhibition at the UB Art Galleries, Buffalo, NY. Her work is included in several public and prominent private collections, including, those of the Contemporary Art Collection of the Federal Republic of Germany, DekaBank Art Collection, Germany, Deutsche Bundesbank Kunstsammlung, Frankfurt, Germany, Helaba Art Collection, Germany, Lenbachhaus Munich, Germany, Sammlung Goetz, Munich, Germany, among others. The artist is currently based in Berlin.

MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY

509 West 24th Street, New York, NY 10011

Chapter will be on view from March 1 to April 14, 2018 in the gallery's 507 W 24th Street space with an opening reception March 1, 2018 6–8PM.

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