

# Joshua Liner Gallery

548 W. 28th Street, 3rd Floor  
New York, NY 10001

## Kris Kuksi

*Triumph*

March 15–April 7, 2012

Opening reception: Thursday, March 15, 6–9 PM

Joshua Liner Gallery is pleased to present *Triumph*, an exhibition of new works by the Kansas artist Kris Kuksi, including mixed-media sculpture, painting, and a large-scale installation. This is Kuksi's third solo outing with the gallery and the most diverse presentation of his work to date.

With its cautionary title, *Triumph* skewers the hubris and folly of human ambition. This cavalcade of epic works references mythology, the occult, and organized religion, and uses age-old techniques of visual storytelling to voice personal angst. Depicting grand themes with extravagant embellishments, Kuksi's assemblages of small, mass-produced materials are intrinsically narrative. Like gilt Baroque altarpieces, their stunning excess of detail is the ideal vehicle for the artist's critique of power and piety. And like those early works of public art, they appeal to the viewer to transcend the strife and striving associated with greed.

The *Surrender of Helios* is a kind of allegorical primer for Kuksi's moral universe. Helios, the Greek sun god, is surrounded by all manner of earthly appetites—territorial dominion symbolized by flags, power represented by soldiers in arms, and carnal desire embodied in prostrate nudes. At the center of this highly aestheticized tableau of bric-a-brac, toy soldiers, and mechanical parts is the reclining Helios. Encircled by temptations, he is caught by the artist in a moment of moral pause or ambivalence—a turning point of self-reflection.

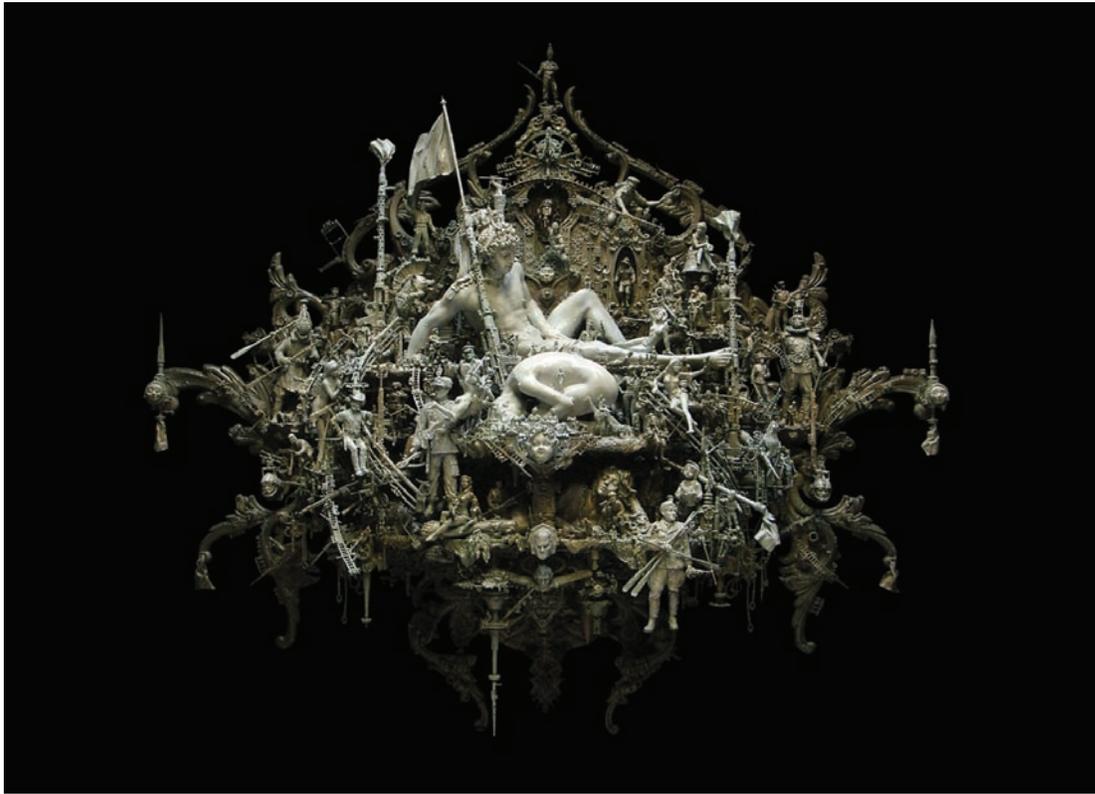
In *Hercules vs. Diana*, the epic struggle is even more pronounced, as the mythological archetypes of male and female square off in a stagy battle of the sexes. Here, the notion of triumph is rendered moot, given the figures' depiction as an equally matched pair. Instead, Kuksi posits a paradigm of balance, one that yields to the natural rhythms of life itself. The busy, mechanistic tableau that surrounds the figures suggests the intrinsic give and take that comprises human experience and, ultimately, history.

Also featured is the tenth installment in Kuksi's trenchant *Churchtank* series. These constructions suggest an "unholy" resonance between the pious power of organized religions and the self-righteous imperialism of the military-industrial complex. This amalgam of a steepled church form fused at the base to a hulking tank is a disturbing vision. Though earlier versions have been smaller and, in the last instance, took the evocative form of a bronze edition, this latest *Churchtank* is a breathtaking, ten-foot installation constructed of wood, a wry condemnation of the abuses of both power and piety regardless of their source. Kuksi argues that the age-old urge to prevail is itself corrupt and ripe now for spiritual revolution.

Born in 1973 in Springfield, Missouri, Kris Kuksi earned his BFA and MFA in Painting at Fort Hays State University and lives and works in Hays, Kansas. Solo exhibitions of his work include *Beast Anthology* and *Imminent Utopia*, Joshua Liner Gallery, New York (2009, 2008); *Scope Art Fair* with Joshua Liner Gallery, Basel, Switzerland (2010); *The Strange and The Fantastic*, Leedy-Voukos Art Center, Kansas City, MO (2004); and *The Within*, Fraser Gallery, Washington, DC (2003). Selected group exhibitions include *Hey! Modern Art & Pop Culture*, Halle Saint Pierre, Paris, France (2011); *Pulse Art Fair* with Joshua Liner Gallery, Miami, Florida (2011) *Paradise Lost*, Williamsburg Art and Historical Center, Brooklyn (2008); and *Flights of Imagination*, Museum HR Giger, Gruyères, Switzerland (2006).

Joshua Liner Gallery, located in New York City's Chelsea Arts district, presents an exciting roster of established and emerging artists from North and South America, Asia, and Europe.

For more information, please visit [www.joshualinergallery.com](http://www.joshualinergallery.com), or contact Elizabeth Kurita at 212.244.7415 or [elizabeth@joshualinergallery.com](mailto:elizabeth@joshualinergallery.com).



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1. *The Surrender of Helios*, 2011 Mixed media assemblage 27 x 32 x 8 in.  
2. *The Visitation*, 2011 Mixed media assemblage 19 x 25 x 8 in.  
3. *Hercules vs. Diana*, 2011 Mixed media assemblage 28 x 26 x 10 in.