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Patricia Waller

## **BAD LUCK**

15 May through 25 July, 2009

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue.

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Patricia Waller calls her new exhibition „Bad Luck“. Bad luck indeed! The falling flower pot struck an unsuspecting head, a dog got his head stuck in a food can, another one was flattened by an oversized bone. But not all of the objects depict cases of merely passive bad luck, a lot exhibit a very active malice: Miss Piggy stuck in the meat grinder, Bambi hacked to pieces, Bugs Bunny speared by an enormous fork, Tweety in the soup, the cut-off thumbs of thumb-sucker Conrad. The figures in these works – anthropomorphized animals – span a historic selection, from fairy tales to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century *Struwwelpeter (Slovenly Peter)* and further to modern comics and Disney creatures. All, however, experience violence, and a lot of blood is shed. Waller’s crocheted figures raise discomfoting questions regarding the way our society deals with violence: the violence we experience, the violence we exert, and the violence we love to consume. The viewer is torn between malevolent gloating over the misfortunes of others and empathy, between the pleasures of destruction – who hasn’t wished for the wolf to finally devour Little Red Riding Hood? – and compassion for these symbols of the helplessness we all experience in the face of destiny. The nature of the depicted violence as internal and controlled by our drives is indicated by the impassive faces of the tortured creatures. Like in comic strips and cartoons, they rise again in a Sisyphus-like manner after each catastrophe, only to face the next inevitable disaster, pitilessly to the tune of that old maxim: “The show must go on.”

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