

**Michael Samuels**

***This Was Tomorrow***

**28 July–15 September 2012**

Press viewing by appointment 24–27 July 2012

Public opening event Saturday 28 July 2012, 3–5pm

Spacex is pleased to announce a major solo exhibition by Michael Samuels, his first in a public UK gallery. The exhibition will showcase *Tragedy of the Commons*, his most ambitious large scale work to date. In this work Samuels continues to investigate sculptural structures, addressing formal, material and spatial qualities. The work will dominate the main gallery space, playing with a sense of scale that will dwarf viewers as they move around the piece.

As with his previous practice, Samuels continues to utilise Modernist furniture, most commonly G-plan. His practice can be characterised as a form of contemporary bricolage. He breaks down the furniture to a point where it can no longer be identified for its intended use, thus heightening the tension between the function of the objects and their immaterial value.

*Tragedy of the Commons* is slight in width compared to its height and the functional elements of a number of the parts are more intelligible. The interiors of drawers are unpolished and used, chipboard is visible as opposed to the veneer previously encountered. Similarly, functional G-clamps and ratchet straps reveal the works construction with Anglepoise lamps inserted in drawers, the whole assemblage is tangled up with various frames and boxes, or with blue LED's. This use of light highlights the forms, exaggerates the voids and extends the structures beyond their physical presence.

*This Was Tomorrow* also includes a selection of new works which have never been shown that further manifest the adhocism and spontaneity of his practice. Floor standing sculptures convey a sense of performative energy. Standing at precarious angles they leave the viewer anxious that collapse is imminent. These draw upon contemporary concepts of ruin, reforming and recycling. Such playful interventions by the artist are rarely planned yet overtly clever.

New wall based pieces have again been created in an impulsive manner, resulting in structures that are both abstract and dynamic. As with previous works, Samuels references Modernist and abstract painting. The formal lines of these wall hung pieces offers up the opportunity to engage with the work both as a three dimensional experience and as the flat plane of a painting. This push towards abstraction maintains the notion that abstraction is only ever possible in relation to function.

**ENDS**

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**Press Release**  
**30/05/12**

**Notes to editors**

**Spacex** is a leading contemporary art gallery located in the centre of Exeter. Our diverse programme encourages the public to engage with the latest developments in contemporary art through a changing exhibitions programme, which includes new commissions, projects and activities. A significant part of our programme, including artist-led projects, events and research, takes place outside of the gallery. We have an international reputation for presenting ideas from some of the most daring and exciting artists working today.

**Michael Samuels**, born in Liverpool, now lives and works in London. He has exhibited internationally including recent exhibitions at Ville du Parc Centre d'art Contemporain, France; Kunsthal KAdE, The Netherlands; The Zabudowicz Collection, London; The EDF Foundation, France and LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial, Spain. He has a longstanding collaborative relationship with Comme des Garçon, commissioned to produce functional interior works for their London and Tokyo stores.

**For further information please contact Spacex marketing manager Rowan Green**  
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Image Sheet  
Michael Samuels  
*This Was Tomorrow*

Michael Samuels, *Tragedy of the Commons*, 2012. Photo Roberto Rubalcava & Beate Sonnenberg. Courtesy Rokeby, London.



Michael Samuels, *Tragedy of the Commons*, 2012 (detail). Photo Roberto Rubalcava & Beate Sonnenberg. Courtesy Rokeby, London.

