

W

Subscribe

FASHION

BEAUTY

PEOPLE

PARTIES

CULTURE

CULTURE » ART & DESIGN » BEGUM YASAR'S HYPOTHESIS



1/10

Giulio Paolini's  
Autoritratto (Self-  
Portrait), 1968. Courtesy  
Archivio Giulio Paolini,  
Turin.

## Begum Yasar's Hypothesis

The curator brought together 12 artists for a Giulio Paolini-inspired exhibit.

July 16, 2014 4:36 PM | by Julie Baumgardner

In 1968, the Italian artist Giulio Paolini created a self-portrait in which he never appears. Instead, a likeness of Henri Rousseau, the French Post-Impressionist painter, stands in for the artist, surrounded by the seminal figures in Paolini's life, including artists Lucio Fontana, Alighiero Boetti and Cy Twombly; his first dealer, Gian Tommaso Liverani; and historians Carla Lonzi and Marisa Volpi.

If the takeaway is that you are the company you keep, then "Hypothesis for an Exhibition," the Paolini-inspired group show which opened last week at New York's Dominique Lévy gallery, put together by associate director Begum Yasar, takes the lesson to heart. Twelve of the hottest artists of the moment—including Harold Ancart, Sebastian Black and Seth Price—riff on the contributions of the Italian artist, who also has a major solo show currently at Whitechapel gallery in London.

Often associated with the Arte Povera movement, though really only tangentially connected, Paolini brought a witty self-reflexivity to his art. The intellectual games he plays in his photo emulsions and sculptures push even the seemingly boundless limits of conceptual art. The goal of the show, Yasar explains, was “detecting Paolini-esque strategies in the current generation, or my immediate circle, of artists.”

For example, an untitled canvas by Josh Smith, initially created as the poster for a joint 2008 group show at two New York galleries, Greene Naftali and Matthew Marks, features a cluster of the artists in the exhibition. Harold Ancart created a work on paper that offers a meditation on an earlier piece he made in 2009. He titled it *Perfect Idea (1) (After You Have No Idea)*. “I told him at first, ‘I don’t really think your work fits in,’” Yasar recalls. “And he got back to me the next day with this. It’s Harold reflecting back on his own practice.”

Although the show is chock-a-block with sought-after New York artists, Yasar is adamant that it’s not about name brands. “That was my fear actually, that it would be seen as a summer show filled with hot new artists,” she says. “But it was just me thinking about who is re-doing Paolini right now.”

*Hypothesis for an Exhibition is on view through August 16, at New York’s Dominique Lévy Gallery, 909 Madison Ave.*

SEE MORE

[Arte Povera](#)

[Begum Yasar](#)

[Dominique Levy Gallery](#)