



A R T O B S E R V E D

ARTISTS MUSEUMS GALLERIES COLLECTORS ARCHIVES JOBS LINKS

Global contemporary art events and news observed from New York City. Suggestion? Email us.



## NEW YORK – “HYPOTHESIS FOR AN EXHIBITION” AT DOMINIQUE LÉVY THROUGH AUGUST 15TH, 2014

August 13th, 2014



Giulio Paolini, *Autoritratto (Self-Portrait)* (1968), Courtesy of Dominique Lévy Gallery and Courtesy Archivio Giulio Paolini, Turin

*Hypothesis for an Exhibition*, a survey show paying homage to the work of conceptual artist Giulio Paolini is open at Dominique Lévy on Madison Avenue through August 16. In addition to Paolini himself, the exhibition features the work of Richard Aldrich, Harold Ancart, Sebastian Black, Kerstin Brätsch, Guyton/Walker, KAYA, Charles Mayton, Seth Price, Josh Smith, R.H. Quaytman, Antek Walczak and Viola Yeşiltaş. Additionally, Studio Manuel Raeder has designed an accompanying publication, which incidentally coincides with London’s Whitechapel Gallery retrospective *Giulio Paolini: To Be or Not to Be*.



*Hypothesis for an Exhibition* (Installation View), Courtesy Dominique Lévy.

Curated by Begum Yasar in a classically conceptual framework, the Lévy exhibition is divided between Paolini's own work and twelve contemporaries, acting in response to his own set of ideas, often embracing Paolini's interests and work in exploring the limits and concepts of language, context and reflexivity. *174* (photograph on panel, 1965), for example, looks like a Gantt chart executed by Daniel Buren. Tracing the trajectory of art history from 1900-1960, the piece illustrates how each form and conceptual mode emerged, as well as which modes continued to stay relevant within other, separate visual codes.



Richard Aldrich, Detail of *Birthmark* (2012), Courtesy the artist and Bortolami Gallery, New York.

The title of the exhibition comes from Paolini's 1963 eponymous work, which was largely un-realized until a 2003 retrospective curated by Germano Celant at the

Fondazione Prada, Milan. The “proposal” is further explored by the other artists’ respective inquiries on this self-reflexivity. Richard Aldrich’s *Birthmark* (2012) is a white canvas, appropriately referred to as “paper and polaroid on linen.” The left edge of the canvas is flanked by a polaroid of Aldrich himself, the lyrics to Pink Floyd’s “Jugband Blues” and a postcard image of painter Andre Raffray’s *Marcel Duchamp removing his Nude Descending a Staircase from the Salon des Indépendant, at the Cubists’ request, Paris 1912* from his “*Marcel Duchamp: La vie illustrée*” (1977), which seeks to depict career highlights and trivial moments in the life of the great-grandfather of Conceptualism.



Guyton/Walker’s *Untitled* (2009), Photo by Martha Fleming-Ives. Courtesy the artists and Greene Naftali, New York.

Indeed, much of the show attempts to separate painting from a physical gesture, moving towards the notion of painting or mark-making as a formal decision across media. Guyton/Walker’s *Untitled* (2009) is an ink-jet image of a grapefruit printed on drywall. Propped, not hung, against the wall using a can of paint further decorated with a fruit motif, the artist cleverly repositions the painting along lines that could equally qualify it as sculpture.



Sebastian Black, *Untitled* (2014), Photo by Elisabeth Bernstein. Courtesy of Dominique Lévy Gallery, New York.

Sebastian Black continues this line of thought with his own *Untitled* (2014). A 4 x 30 x 18” plyth bears gouache drawings of John Lennon, in the style of the original 1969 self-portrait by the late musician. The drawing is mounted within a simple wooden frame, further elevated by small wooden pedestal sloped on both sides. A plastic white figurine of a man stands next to the topmost frame, mimicking the viewer in the act of “looking down” at the drawing.



Sebastian Black, Detail view of *Untitled* (2014), Photo by Elisabeth Bernstein. Courtesy of Dominique Lévy Gallery, New York.

If one refers to the tail end of Sol LeWitt’s definition of conceptual art, that is, that “execution is a perfunctory affair” the Paolini retrospective feels somewhat crowded

with the amount of energy and *ideas* present in each work. Presenting so much fertile conceptual ground to explore, the show leaves the viewer longing for Paolini's even broader retrospective on the other side of the Atlantic.



Kerstin Brätsch, Outside view of *Interchangeable Painting (3 parts)* from “*Glow rod tanning with...*” series (2014), Courtesy the artist and Dominique Lévy Gallery, New York.

— M.S. Lax

Read more: *Hypothesis for an Exhibition* [Dominique Lévy]

<http://artobserved.com/2014/08/new-york-hypothesis-for-an-exhibition-at-dominique-levy-through-august-15th-2014/#sthash.WGcDxGN1.dpuf>