

DOMINIQUE LÉVY

SEEING DOUBLE JOHN BALDESSARI | JEFF KOONS

Dominique Lévy is pleased to present SEEING DOUBLE, an exhibition of works by John Baldessari and Jeff Koons. This pair of artists deploys affectlessness, kitsch, and humor in an effort to reflect American culture in all of its banal glory and glorious banality.

SEEING DOUBLE will be on view at the gallery's booth (K11) at Art Basel Miami Beach, December 5-8, 2013.

In their paintings, sculptures, and mixed media works, Baldessari and Koons appropriate the by-products of American industry – synthetic Hollywood images, erotic advertising come-ons, and the perfect likeness of mass-produced consumer goods. Baldessari's manipulations of found images appear deliberately imperfect, while Koons' exact facsimiles of found products convert mundane consumer goods into precious aesthetic objects. Each artist achieves a striking balance between seductiveness and banality and, with uncanny awareness, points to the complex illusions to which we are all vulnerable.

John Baldessari hails from Los Angeles, and his work is redolent of his city's mix of surf and sex, cars and craft, drugs and Disneyland. His signature juxtapositions are inspired by the pervasive influence of Hollywood as well as French Structuralist films. He has used pictures in a way that suggests sequences of film stills, letting us know that meaning is constructed only from context. Meanwhile, Jeff Koons alienates his chosen elements from their original contexts, thus heightening our awareness of buried connections and cultural codes.

Among works presented in SEEING DOUBLE is Baldessari's *Horizontal Women* (1983), a stacked composition of images of women appropriated from soap operas, athletic competitions, and advertisements. Scenes of lovemaking, passion, athleticism, and possible murder are shown in a single sequence. SEEING DOUBLE also includes Jeff Koons' *Wrecking Ball* (2003), a sculpture of polychrome aluminum, powder coated carbon steel, and coated steel chain, that fully embodies the artist's vision. "If I look at a Warhol soup can or a urinal by Duchamp, these are cries of communication," the artist has said. "I don't think they're about the objects...but I think that objects are metaphors for people."

