



Scala Contarini del Bovolo

Venezia, San Marco 4299

Corte Contarini del Bovolo

30124 Venezia

Pablo Echaurren. Du champ magnétique **Works 1977-2017**

The Revolution Stripped Bare by Its Agitators, Even: Pablo Echaurren reinterprets Duchamp

Scala Contarini del Bovolo, S. Marco 4299, 30124 Venezia

9 May – 15 October 2017

Exhibition curated by Raffaella Perna and Kevin Repp.

Organized by **Galleria d'Arte Maggiore G.A.M.** in Bologna with the collaboration of the **Fondazione Echaurren Salaris** in Rome.

The exhibition presents a series of works produced over the course of forty years in which Pablo Echaurren holds a dialogue with the shade of the father of conceptual art Marcel Duchamp. The exhibition will be staged in the physical space of the Scala Contarini del Bovolo, whose spiral shape (bovolo means snail in the Venetian dialect) alludes emblematically to the pairs of opposites high/low and ascent/descent.

Taking his cue from Duchamp's work *Nu descendant un escalier*, the artist has conceived a series of signboards that invite visitors, in an onomatopoeic play on words, to climb the stairs (*Nous ascendants un escalier*) and then to go down them (*Nous descendants un escalier*).

The exhibition is also a journey in the remote/recent and imagined/experienced time that connects three dates: 1917, 1977 and 2017.

1917: the year in which Duchamp shows his ready-made *Fountain*, epitome of the provocative work of art.

1977: giving up the profession of artist for some time and forging links with the ironic and creative current known as the *Indiani metropolitani*, Echaurren develops a new collective language with the group based on the use of Duchampian provocations, but in a political key, creating fanzines, drawings and collages and staging surprise happenings.

2017: the artist decides to go back to the materials connected with those days, exercise books, written and drawn notes, and to propose new works that point to the possibility of making use of Duchamp again today as a palimpsest on which to trace out a personal journey.

The hub of the exhibition is a series of collages that find themselves on a collision course with the materials on paper in the boîte verte (1934), the box that Duchamp named after his work *La mariée mise à nu par ses célibataires, même*. This is not just an object of personal sentimental value for Echaurren but also a stimulus and a starting point for reflection on the practice of art as something linked to the dimension of thought.

The box, as is well-known, contains reproductions of notes, photos, drawings and loose sheets related to the creation of the earlier work, also called *The Large Glass*. A sort of toolbox, but also a potential collage. Echaurren, who has been practising the medium of collage alongside other artistic techniques since 1969, has utilized copies of the facsimiles in the boîte to create fifty works in an imaginary chess game played with the great artist. **In order to underline its importance, an original specimen of the box is materially present in the exhibition.**

At the end of the route through the exhibition stands the ceramic sculpture *U/siamo tutti Duchamp* ('We All Use/Are Duchamp'), a copy of the historic urinal signed R. Mutt in which Echaurren has intervened by applying a sort of tattoo made using a technique derived from the Compendiario style of grotesque decoration developed in Faenza in the 16th century. In doing so he has turned the object into a disconcerting piece of furniture through a *détournement* that places it somewhere between mediaeval art and graffiti, past and present, high and low.

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BIOGRAPHY

Pablo Echaurren was born in Rome in 1951. He started to paint at the age of 18 and, through Gianfranco Baruchello, was discovered by the critic and gallerist Arturo Schwarz, who promoted his work in Italy and abroad. Between 1971 and 1975 he exhibited in Berlin, Basel, Philadelphia, Zurich, New York and Brussels and in 1975 was invited to show at the Paris Biennale.

His output at the beginning of his career was along minimalist lines, characterized by a conceptual approach and a rejection of pictorial conventions, offering an alternative to the idea of the work of art as fetish.

This is the direction in which the artist has moved ever since, always looking for new languages and new forms of expression and never content to rest on his laurels.

Not just a painter, he has engaged in a wide range of applied activities, producing illustrations, posters and book covers, including that of the best seller *Porci con le ali*, as well as “metacomics” that investigate the possible relationship between the avant-garde and popular art, seeking that necessary and fertile short-circuit between “high” and “low,” between culture and frivolity, in keeping with the ideal of an art open to all. His creativity has also found expression in the field of writing, with the publication of novels and pamphlets on the world of art.

Since 2000, his multifaceted production has been presented at a number of solo exhibitions: *Pablo Echaurren. Dagli anni settanta a oggi* (Chiostro del Bramante, Rome 2004); *Pablo Echaurren a Siena* (Palazzo Pubblico, Siena 2008); *Crhomo Sapiens* (Museo della Fondazione Roma, Palazzo Cipolla, Rome 2010-11); *Lasciare il segno* (MAR, Ravenna 2011); *Al ritmo dei Ramones* (Auditorium Parco della Musica, Rome 2006); *L'invenzione del basso* (Auditorium Parco della Musica, Rome 2009); *Baroque'n'Roll* (MACRO, Rome 2011); *Matta: Roberto Sebastian Matta, Gordon Matta-Clark, Pablo Echaurren* (Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice 2013); *Iconoclast* (Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art, London 2014); *Contropittura* (Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, 2015-16); *Make Art Not Money* (Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago de Chile 2016).

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opening Tuesday 9 May, 6 - 9 pm

until: 15 October 2017

opening hours: 10 am - 1 pm and 2 - 6 pm

closed on Mondays

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