



Galleri Nicolai Wallner is pleased to present *Not Me, Me, Not Me*, a solo exhibition by Jonathan Monk.

Taking a thoroughly irreverent stance, Jonathan Monk takes on many issues central to artistic practice and the art world around us, such as originality and authorship. Using aesthetic elements and conceptual principles generally associated with the classical era of conceptual art—the beginning of the 1960s through the late 1970s —Jonathan Monk's works often directly take on the artists who have come before him, his contemporary peers and in more recent years also himself. This position, which has a hint of Duchampian cynicism, is a platform through which ideas around what it is to be an artist, what constitutes a work of art, how we establish cultural wealth and value, and what originality means in a world where things are constantly reused, recycled and brought back into a contemporary context.

Monk's first exhibition with the gallery was in 1994, and this long-standing relationship can be seen throughout *Not Me, Me, Not Me*. The main work is a single installation, *An Ensemble*, which fills a large area in the gallery space. *An Ensemble* is composed of many of Monk's existing works spanning the last twenty-five years, including sculptures, paintings, and neons.

The paintings are stacked up on the floor, leaning up against a wall. Some are partially covered up, others entirely covered up. The sculptures and neons are on the floor directly in front of them, installed tightly together, with intention. The space around each piece is too small to weave through them, yet open enough to be able to appreciate the pieces on their own.

The individual pieces in the installation have been part of past gallery exhibitions and art fair booths, museum shows and biennales. Each of them have their own unique value and origin, yet in this context of a single installation these narratives come together to reveal another side of the story. They are not grouped by technique, medium or theme, but rather by the fact that they are all created by Monk. The story becomes more introspective, more about Jonathan's role as an artist, and asks us to question how we assign value and originality to an artwork.

Who defines how we constitute an "original" artwork? The artist? The gallerist? The audience? The collector? The art historian? The critic? The museum curator? Evoking the grand masters of painting (among others) who often would reuse parts of canvas, rework or alter composition well after they have finished, Monk reminds us that what we understand about art and the definition of art itself is always moving, never finished, and constantly in flux almost like life itself.

Alongside this installation is a series of Monk's Restaurant Drawings, where Monk draws iconic works of art on personal receipts from cafes and restaurants which are then sold for the price indicated on the receipt, playfully highlighting the ways in which value, art and currency come together.