

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THOMAS BAYRLE

STRIPPENZIEHER, BIG BLOCK
SEPTEMBER 29 – OCTOBER 27, 2012

So it went on cooking and the porridge rose over the edge, and still it cooked on until the kitchen and whole house were full, and then the next house, and then the whole street, just as if it wanted to satisfy the hunger of the whole world.

Sweet Porridge by Jacob and William Grimm

Thomas Bayrle's graphically covered bodies and objects are a world made out of dot and grid, cell and body. Superstructures spread like the fantastical porridge over cities and land, cell after cell, yet never the same, to form an exquisite "jelly" of monotony. The grid rules and connects everything. A continuum of backwards and forwards, up and down, through which a rhythm is formed. In Bayrle's work nothing is ever definite, but always in flux. Chaos is organization, individual is collective, and the humming rhythm of the cities and machines is silent meditation.

In *Strippenzieher*, a series of works-on-paper shown in this exhibition, the background becomes the foreground. What was once hidden is illuminated. Formally a structural underpinning for historical works like *Capsel* or *Madonna Mercedes*, the *Strippenzieher* series has become a work of its own. Several individual hands are shown pulling printed pieces of Latex, acting as a community to make a body of work.

"When I was working on the face of Mao – or the one of my mother I stretched a small image in 1000 different ways...

I said earlier - we always were working in a team - on an open photocopy machine - 6 hands were stretching pulling pressing strain little pieces of Latex – o boy"

The other central work of the exhibition, *BIG BLOCK*, approaches the relationship between singular and whole in the form of a V8 engine reconstructed as sculpture. The working rhythm of the machine emulates the life-sustaining beat, which fuels the cells that make up our own bodies. Beat after beat until the monotony releases the meditative sound of women praying the rosary to create a superstructure so "highly efficient as if they have squeezed a dome in a very small, compressed format," until the motor ultimately reveals its own beauty.

Thomas Bayrle (b. 1937 in Berlin, Germany) has been active since the mid-1960s working in painting, sculpture, fashion and design. His focus on the aestheticisation of the consumer world through magnifying its serial nature, has grouped Bayrle's practice in the tradition of Pop Art, as well as situated him along fellow German artist Sigmar Polke and Gerhard Richter. Bayrle, lives and works in Frankfurt/Main, Germany. He participated in documenta 3, 1964 and documenta 6, 1977 in Kassel, Germany. From 1972 to 2002 Bayrle was a professor at the Städelschule in Frankfurt/Main. Recent solo exhibitions include *Air de Paris*, Paris (2012); *Dependence*, Brussels (2011); *Base Progetti per l'Arte*, Florence (2010); *Musée d'art Moderne et Contemporain*, Geneva and his first major survey at *Museu d'Art Contemporani*, Barcelona (both 2009). Most recently Bayrle was included in *DOCUMENTA (13)* in Kassel, Germany.

