

siembra 31

jimmie durham

drawings

from august 21, 2021

kurimanzutto presents a selection of drawings made by Jimmie Durham between 1989 and 2020 in Siembra. Enigmatic and apparently innocent or accidental, they move away from the illustrative intention of drawing as a medium in favor of a poetic exploration of drawing as a way of writing, or of writing as a drawing act, as well as the relationship between forms and concepts. The set of drawings encompass different types of gestures or operations on paper: interventions on old record sheets, texts that become scribbles, traces of objects covered in graphite thrown against a paper, abstractions on found documents, or unruly lines that pulse along a rulebook sheet for training engineering purposes. The found papers that he uses emanate temporal thickness and store stories, traces, memories or information that depend on their material support to continue existing in the world.

Drawing as a medium intrinsically implies the impossibility of imitating reality, and in that sense it represents for Durham a medium that offers an implicit freedom. Like writing, drawing has been very present throughout the artist's career. The use of discarded and found papers, such as plane tickets, accounting sheets, drafts or papers discarded during writing or artistic creation processes by the artist himself have been a constant in his work. By reusing forgotten pieces of paper that were destined to be lost or even disintegrated over time, Durham seeks to immortalize them. According to the artist, "our civilization is basically made of scraps of paper, and we have too many that were used once and then became useless thereafter, as is most of our history, or as we wish it were".

kurimanzutto

gob. rafael rebollar 94
col. san miguel chapultepec
11850 mexico city

tue – thu, 11 am – 6 pm
fri – sat, 11 am – 4 pm

press
julia villaseñor
julia@kurimanzutto.com
+52 55 52 56 24 08

www.kurimanzutto.com
@kurimanzutto



about the artist

In his artistic research, Jimmie Durham is interested in what happens "away from language", in the relationship between forms and concepts. Working against Western rationalism, his practice is rooted in uncertainty and paradox. Durham creates in an array of mediums: drawings, installations, video — which he uses to document his performances—, and sculptural constructions often combined with written messages, photographs, and objects. Covering a broad range of topics in artworks as well as in essays and poetry, his production is often laced with the agility of wordplay, a dry, highly critical humor and, above all, insight. He consistently addresses the political and cultural forces that construct our contemporary

discourses, the history of oppression, the futility of violence, and the powerlessness of the minorities in the world. Jimmie Durham works with both natural and artificial materials, but he is particularly drawn to the intrinsic qualities of those that have been used throughout history as tools: stone, wood, bone, iron and glass. Stone is a primary material for Durham due to its role in defining power dynamics of culture and society through architecture and ideas of monumentality; He uses it to underscore the polemics of nature vs. culture, religion, architecture, and Eurocentric ideas of history.

Jimmie Durham moved to Geneva in 1969 and enrolled in the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts where he worked on sculpture and performance. In 1973 he moved back to the U.S. and became involved in the American Indian Movement as director of the International Indian Treaty Council and its representative before the United Nations, thus becoming the first official representative of a minority within this organization. In 1980, he focused his attention back to art, but remained concerned with dismantling stereotypes of American Indians that had been widely accepted and disseminated in American culture: a theme he returns to in many of his essays. Durham gained notoriety within the New York art scene, but found his work was seen as “Indian art” and failed to encourage fundamental –political or artistic– discussions about how American Indian history and culture have been misrepresented by others. Disappointed by this misunderstanding and by the American government’s intractable policies regarding the Indian movement, he left the U.S. in 1987 and moved to Cuernavaca, Mexico where he remained until his return to Europe in 1994.

Jimmie Durham received the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement prize at the 58th Biennale di Venezia on 2019.

Jimmie Durham lives and works between Berlin and Naples.

kurimanzutto

gob. rafael rebollar 94
col. san miguel chapultepec
11850 mexico city

tue – thu, 11 am – 6 pm
fri – sat, 11 am – 4 pm

press
julia villaseñor
julia@kurimanzutto.com
+52 55 52 56 24 08

www.kurimanzutto.com
@kurimanzutto

