



BERTRAND LAVIER

LIEVRE A LA ROYALE
WALT DISNEY

Massimo De Carlo is proud to present *Lièvre A La Royale/Walt Disney* the first exhibition of the French artist Bertrand Lavier in its London gallery.

Bertrand Lavier's practice makes key use of irony and humour: the artist is on a constant, light-hearted, investigation of art itself. The analysis of the medium and of the gesture is explored among the relationship between the pictorial element and object-hood.

The artist calls his bodies of works *chantiers* (worksites in French), meaning that they are in constant evolution. The questions that are raised through his works adapt every time to a new context: what is relevant here is the process rather than the answer itself. The title *Lièvre A La Royale* references in fact to the most complicated and long recipe to cook hare. As put by the artist: 'it is the best way to cook and eat hare. Making a piece of work for me is similar to cooking hare: long, complicated but wonderful in the end'.

Lièvre A La Royale/Walt Disney showcases a selection of works, made specifically for this exhibition, that are part of two of the artist's most iconic *chantiers*: the Walt Disney Productions and the Mirror Paintings.

Bertrand Lavier started creating the Walt Disney series in 1984. He was inspired by a comic strip that appeared in 1977 in which Mickey Mouse and his spouse Minnie visit a museum of modern art. The artist was so fascinated by the clichéd paintings that appeared in the comic, which Walt Disney had created in order to mimic modernist paintings, which he decided to photograph them and reproduce them in life size. In these colourful canvases the artist plays with the mediums of photography and painting: hiding beneath what appears to be a hand made painting is a meticulous and semi-industrial process that uses different materials and techniques such as ink-jet printing on canvas and silk screening. Here the artist transports the fictitious and whimsical world of Walt Disney into the gallery space, redefining the borders between fiction and reality, thought and action, gesture and medium.

The medium the artist focuses on in the Mirror Paintings series is that of the brushstroke. Here Bertrand Lavier covers three mirrors with silver brushstrokes, questioning the significance of the gesture and the medium itself in a contemporary context whilst at the same time reflecting upon how it was used by artists he admired such as Vincent Van Gogh and Roy Lichtenstein. The Mirror Paintings are uncannily puzzling for the viewer: through the use of the brushstroke the artist blurs out our reflection, allowing him once again to mock normality by transporting us into an unreal and imaginary dimension.

What you see in the work of Lavier is never what it appears to be at first glance: every piece hides in its apparent simple de-codification a series of layers that testify the industrious conceptual and crafting process that is behind each work.

MASSIMO DE CARLO

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Bertrand Lavier was born in Châtillon-sur-Seine in France in 1949. He Lives and works in Aignay-le-Duc and in Paris. Bertrand Lavier has had solo exhibitions in prominent institutions such as the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, FR, (2012); Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, FR, (2002); Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Geneva, CH, (2001); Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA, USA (1999); Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Castello di Rivoli, Turin, (1996), IT. Group exhibitions include: *The Illusion of Light*, Palazzo Grassi, Francois Pinault Foundation, Venice (2014); *Disparitions réciproques*, FRAC Poitou-Charentes, Angoulême (2013); *Lyon Biennial*, Lyon (2000); *Venice Biennale*, Venice (1997) and *Documenta*, Kassel (1982). His work is collected by prestigious institution such as the Foundation Louis Vuitton in Paris and the Collection Lambert in Avignon.

Hard Facts:

Massimo De Carlo, London
55 South Audley Street
London W1K 2QH
From November 28th, 2014 until January 31st 2015
Open Tuesday to Saturday, 10:00am – 6.00pm
Opening: Thursday November 27th, 2014, from 6.00pm

For further information and materials:

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