

**GBE
291 GRAND STREET
3RD FLOOR**

**THOMAS BAYRLE
COMPLETE FILMS 1979-2007
FEBRUARY 10 – MARCH 13, 2015**

Standing in the weaving factory, day after day, hour after hour, I sank deep into this undergrowth of warp and weft. I kind of melted away...immersed in the endless reinforcement of millions of crossovers and crossunders...The finished product – the fabric – represented the totality, a whole: a society or collective. A single thread represented something like individuality. That is where I got the idea that the social fabric is made up of individuals who are woven together but cannot move

Thomas Bayrle

Gavin Brown's enterprise is pleased to announce a solo exhibition by German artist Thomas Bayrle, a pioneer of Pop, seriality and Media Art. This marks his third exhibition at the gallery and will showcase his complete film works for the first time.

For more than half a century Bayrle has been warning us visually about mass society, the mechanism of communication and its image production. Formally trained as a Jacquard weaver (1957-1959), Bayrle transferred the technical and creative *modus operandi* of weaving on to his artistic concept and methods. Since 1966 he has used the resources of artistic collage to weave individual images into an overall picture, for which he coined the term *superform*. Bayrle's superforms, in which thousands of miniature images are collaged together to create a larger picture, are both a celebration and a critique of a modern and global society.

Presented for the first time in their totality, Bayrle's films are a paradigmatic expression of the artists' singular visual language, perceptible no matter the media. In the videos – initially created with simple rubber stamps and later using computer programs - images and sounds of highways characterize a state of modernity where we are "racing to stand still". Works such as *Sunbeam* and *Autobahnkreuz*, are metaphors for an undoing and redoing of the social fabric, the making and unmaking of totalities out of individual bits woven together. While the mind-bending video *B)ALT* consists of disturbing, digitally animated footage of an infant's face embedded in that of the artist and vice versa.

Alongside these complete film works, this exhibition will present four of Bayrle's most recent paintings. On the occasion of a recent trip to Rome, Bayrle encountered the fabled Caravaggio painting *San Matteo e l'angelo*, in the Contarelli Chapel in San Luigi dei Francesi. The painting inspired him to produce a new series of works – the *Caravaggio Series* - in which the repeating image or *module* are iPhones, emblematic symbols of both celebration and alert for a *hypercommunication* so typical of today's *Zeitgeist*.

Thomas Bayrle (b. 1937, Berlin) lives and works in Frankfurt, Germany. His work has been shown internationally in museums and institutions, including: MACBA, Barcelona and MAMCO, Geneva (2009); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2008); documenta, Kassel (1964, 1977, 2005, 2012); Venice Biennale (2003, 2009), The retrospective Thomas Bayrle: All-in One was shown in 2013/14 at Wiels, Brussels; MADRE, Naples; Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead; and IAC Villeurbanne/RhôneAlpes. His upcoming solo exhibitions include a survey at the Lenbachhaus in Munich and at the ICA in Miami.

