

JORGE MACCHI

Mikrokosmos

April 7 - May 27, 2017

If I had to define what art is I would say that it is what generates a sense of strangeness.

Jorge Macchi

Galerie Peter Kilchmann is pleased to present its fourth solo exhibition by Argentinean artist Jorge Macchi. Born in Buenos Aires in 1963, the Argentinean capital remains still today the pivotal center of his artistic work. Representing the diversity of media in Macchi's oeuvre, the show displays in a challenging manner a selection of paintings, installations, works on paper and photographic works.

Inspired by the collection of progressive piano pieces *Mikrokosmos*, composed by Bela Bartók between 1926 and 1939, Jorge Macchi creates with his exhibition a little universe: the works on view act just like Bartók's etudes, and continuously increase in their level of complexity, building up on each other. At first each piece acts for itself. Yet, the invisible parallels and links that keep all the works together within the cosmos are soon sensed. Familiar components from technique, materiality and format; or fragments of images can be encountered consistently though assembled in an entire different way. Thus, in *Extreme Weather* (c-print, diptych, 46 x 56 cm) we encounter the details of two city maps that were recorded at a different time and place. While the view of the map of an English city has been damaged by rain drops, the map of a small town located near Buenos Aires has been affected by sunlight. A dialogue between the permanent and the transitory, stability and the destructive influences from outside is also present in *Cardboard* (oil on canvas, 105 x 129 cm). The painting shows the broken window of a car that has been temporarily substituted for protection by a piece of cardboard. Macchi translated the snapshot character of the photograph that served as his source to the large-format canvas. In *Iconoclasta* (oil on canvas, 196 x 106 cm) we are confronted with the destructive forces of gravity in an ironic way. One might smile at the sight of the cracked glass plate of an over-sized realistically painted iPhone.

The reference to music is also a driving force throughout Macchi's work, giving it at times a formal, and at times a content-related frame. So it is no surprise when we walk through the exhibition and come across *Línea y punto* (see invitation card) on a sheet of music of Bartók's *Mikrokosmos*: directly on the white gallery walls hangs a simple small-sized sheet of paper showing the score of an Etude by Bartók. Like a waterfall, flexible iron wires of varying thickness fall arbitrarily to the ground from each individual note. Music, which is actually something fleeting and intangible, becomes suddenly an unusual haptic element that connects with the physical exhibition space. The installation *Ladder* resembles a scale whose melody leads us over a 260 cm running wooden ladder towards an indeterminate direction.

At the same time, Macchi succeeds to sensitize the viewer to the perception of everyday optical phenomena: in *Mare Marginis* (lat. "marginal sea") (installation, 150 x 80 x 75 cm) he uses a mere wooden table, covers it with a transparent paper and a glass plate and by the pressure of a simple desk lamp creates a structure of semicircle folds on the tender paper. The artificial light source enhances the depth of the wrinkles and reminds one of the even waves on a slightly choppy sea surface. The instrumentation of various artistic means such as drawing, text, installation, sculpture, ready-made, photography, collage, cut-out, print, architecture and painting, in Macchi's works is constantly moving around the conflicts between interplay and autonomy, attraction and rejection.

The variety of the image carriers has to do with the special relationship which I try to create between the pictures and the technique. (...) When I exhibit, I like to assemble works in quite different techniques. My goal is to be able to see an underground river flowing through all the objects, even if I can not define the name of this river.

Jorge Macchi's work has been exhibited in Europe and America since the mid-1980s. In 2016 the MALBA - Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Argentina presented with *Perspectiva* the first major retrospective in the artist's hometown. This exhibition is currently on display at the CA2M - Centro de Arte 2 de Mayo, Madrid, Spain. In 2016 the City Hall of Deinze, Belgium presented the solo exhibition *Book of Hours*. In 2011 the S.M.A.K. - Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent, Belgium presented the individual exhibition *Music Stands Still*. In 2016 Macchi participated in the group exhibition *Unfinished: Thoughts Left Visible* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA. In the group exhibition entitled *Mirror Images* Macchi's Installation *Rendevous* will be on view at the Kunstmuseum Thun, Switzerland until April 30, 2017. The catalog published by MALBA in the context of the exhibition *Perspectiva* is available in the gallery.

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