

A-A', B-B' was produced in collaboration with:

Norm, Zurich
All About Willow, Isle of Eigg
Yasuo Miichi, Osaka
DSD Modelli, Turin
Sculpture & Design, Glasgow
Karl Isakson & Emil Rønn Andersen, Copenhagen
Daniil Kondratyev, Tel Aviv
Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, Turin
The Scottish National Galleries, Edinburgh
Abacus Model Makers, Glasgow
Glasgow Print Studios, Glasgow
Lézard Graphique, Brumath

Simon Starling

A-A', B-B'

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The Modern Institute
14–20 Osborne Street
Glasgow G1 5QN
www.themoderninstitute.com

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Galleria Franco Noero
Piazza Carignano 2
10123 Turin
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Dressing Up

For his painting *The Finding of Moses* (circa 1736–1738) Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696–1770) took a rather humble biblical story and glamorously restaged it in the context of, what appears to be, 17th century courtly splendour with all the accompanying trappings; ladies-in-waiting, halberdiers and a peppering of dwarfs and sylphlike greyhounds. Even the lowly halberdiers are dressed in noble finery. These aristocratic thoroughbreds inhabit a painting of typically eloquent artificiality and contrivance, a masquerade of sorts, which was heavily inspired by a painting on the same subject by Tiepolo's Venetian precursor Paolo Veronese (1528–1588). In the early 19th century the originally panoramic painting was cut into two unequal parts, creating a more conventionally centred scene (*The Finding of Moses* now in the collection of the Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh) and an enchanting, if highly unconventional, landscape with its truncated halberdier and hound (*A Halberdier in a Landscape* now in the Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, Turin). In many ways, the Halberdier was a disturbing element in the original painting, his towering presence out of sorts with the scale of the rest of the scene, but none the less typical of Tiepolo's often dizzying compositions that seem to propose multiple viewpoints, almost as if the viewer is invited to occupy and navigate the pictorial space itself.

Dressing Down

While the owner of *A Halberdier in a Landscape*, Giovanni “Gianni” Agnelli, Fiat supremo between 1966 and 1996, lived a largely rarefied and glamorous life, he was none the less active in trying to find common ground with the ordinary people of Turin and, perhaps more significantly, his own factory workers. While this “common touch” found voice in his consistent support for his beloved Juventus Football Club (Italy's most renowned team that is owned by the family to this day), his desire to connect with ordinary people was also manifest in his choice of cars. Even though Agnelli owned a wide range of highly exclusive, custom-built cars, he was also a big fan of standard production cars. As well as owning eleven Fiat Pandas for driving in the mountains or by the sea, Agnelli, or L'Avvocato (The Lawyer) as he was also known, was most often seen in Turin driving a blue Fiat 125 Special, a standard-issue family saloon with a modest 1.6-litre engine produced by Fiat between 1967 and 1972. It has been suggested

that he drove this non-descript car to be anonymous and for fear of being kidnapped but these ideas are perhaps contradicted by the car's unique, hard to obtain number plate, A00000 TO, that signalled to the people of the city that L'Avvocato was in town.

The Cut / The Cutaway

For this two-part exhibition in Glasgow and Turin, these two phenomena—these two masquerades—have been conflated in a process of both geographical and material transposition and transmutation. The Scottish portion of the painting, *The Finding of Moses*, has been reproduced photographically at 1:1 scale and will be re-presented in Turin, the home of its truncated left side, *A Halberdier in a Landscape*. In turn a photographic reproduction of *A Halberdier* will appear in the Scottish gallery. Further to this geographic transposition, the somewhat brutal logic of the truncated painting, cut as it is into two unequal parts, has been applied physically to a blue Fiat 125 Special, which has been meticulously cut in the same proportions to the cut of Tiepolo's painting, to create two similarly unequal parts. The larger front section of the 125 is exhibited in Glasgow, alongside the reproduction of *A Halberdier in a Landscape*, while the smaller back section of the car will accompany the larger section of the painting in the Turin exhibition.

Masked Figures

Compounding the idea of a masquerade, the exhibition will include two self-portraits of the artist—standing figures implied by simple steel armatures—wearing masks of Gianni Agnelli and Tiepolo's halberdier made in collaboration with master noh mask maker Yasuo Miichi. Leather-clad casts of the artist's right hand further define these figures—in the mask of Agnelli, the artist holds the blackly comic Dario Fo play, *Trumpets and Raspberries* (1974), about an exchange of identities between Agnelli and a Fiat factory worker following the attempted kidnapping of the Fiat boss, while as Tiepolo's truncated Halberdier, he clutches a halberd while gazing eastwards, emulating the pose from the original painting.

An Aside

In addition to these theatrical masked figures, two actors, Jimmy Chisholm and Kath Howden, will perform a crucial aside from Dario Fo's play *Trumpets and Raspberries* as an interrup-

tion to the exhibition opening. Chisholm and Howden played Antonio/Agnelli and Lucia in a performance of the play at the Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh in 2008.

Hands

Hands again appear in a series of three daguerreotypes entitled *Hand of the Artist's Father*, *Hand of the Artist*, *Hand of the Artist's Son*. These ghostly images, made on mirror-like sheets of silver-plated copper, seem to morph one into the other as time marks and transforms what appears to be the same hand.

Greyhounds

Linking the regal 17th century setting of Tiepolo's painting to the production of the late 1960s Fiat, a series of photographs of thoroughbred greyhounds has been made at the photo studios housed at the Mirafiori car plant in Turin. These large-scale studios, with their seamless white spaces designed for photographing cars and trucks become an oddly fitting setting for these predominantly white, pedigree dogs, the product of centuries of selective breeding and aesthetic refinement.

Woven Works

The exhibition also includes two woven willow baskets, inspired by a custom-made roof rack for another of Gianni Agnelli's many cars. While one basket, of clearly human dimensions (*Manual Transmission*), remains empty, the other is transformed into a vitrine displaying a series of materials generated in the development of the exhibition as a whole (*A–A'; B–B' (Archive)*).

Home-made Castiglioni Lamps

The Home-made Castiglioni Lamp series continues an on-going interest in the origins of familiar design objects. Just as certain works have tracked particular materials or ideas back to source, these new sculptures re-prototype Achille Castiglioni's iconic Toio lamp (1962), returning that now mass-manufactured design to its roots in a number of readily available found objects. Typical of Castiglioni's approach to evolving designs from a collage of repurposed objects, in this case a fishing rod and a car headlamp.

Riforma

For the exhibitions in Glasgow and Turin, Simon Starling has invited Norm, the influential Zurich-based graphic design trio—Dimitri Bruni, Manuel Krebs and Ludovic Varone, to collaborate with him on the exhibition. For *A–A'; B–B'*, Norm have designed a large-scale silkscreen printed poster using their font Riforma. Further to this, Norm presents material related to the development of Riforma, a font with an elaborate ‘backstory’, a large-scale type specimen and leaflet that have, like the poster, been integrated into the labelling of the exhibition.

List of Works Glasgow

Bookshop Norm, Zurich present material related to the evolution of the typeface *Riforma*

1-3 Envelope
1:1 scale archival pigment print
Image Size: 49 × 35 cm / Perspex Size: 53 × 39 cm
Reproduction of the original envelope, 35.2 × 24.8 cm, 1972
Courtesy Museum für Gestaltung Zürich

Letter
1:1 scale archival pigment print
Image Size: 30 × 40 cm / Perspex Size: 34 × 44 cm
Reproduction of the original 1972 letter, 21 × 29.7 cm
Courtesy Museum für Gestaltung Zürich

Sleeves (with 14 slides)
1:1 scale archival pigment print
Image Size: 35 × 49 cm / Perspex Size: 39 × 53 cm
Reproduction of the 4 original 1972 sleeves, each 12.8 × 16.8 cm
Courtesy Museum für Gestaltung Zürich

4 Lightbox
14 framed 35 mm transparencies,
Replicas of the 14 original 1972 35 mm colour transparencies
MDF, paint, cardboard, dibond, perspex, LEDs, transformer, cable
45 × 35 × 20 cm
Courtesy Museum für Gestaltung Zürich

5 Boards
1:1 scale archival Indigo print
Reconstructions of 7 of the 14 presentation boards reproduced
on the 35 mm colour transparencies
Each: 42 × 21.7 cm

6 Building
1:100 scale model
Reconstruction of the Italcare headquarters building reproduced
according to the 35 mm colour transparencies No. 20 and 21
MDF, perspex, plasticard, metal, paint
60 × 40 × 35.8 cm

All works 2019

A-A', B-B' List of Works Glasgow

List of Works Glasgow

Main Gallery

- A Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, *A Halberdier in a Landscape*, 1736–38 (Formerly the right-hand portion of *The Finding of Moses*)
Collection Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, Turin
2019
1:1 scale archival pigment print
Image Size: 202 × 132 cm / Paper Size: 205 × 473.5cm / Perspex Size: 205 × 473.5cm
- B Fiat 125 Special, 1968 / Cutaway View (Front Section)
2019
316.1 × 161.1 × 139 cm
- C The artist, wearing a mask of the former Fiat supremo Giovanni Agnelli, reads an aside from Dario Fo's political satire *Trumpets and Raspberries* (1974) in which a disfigured Agnelli has his face reconstructed in the image of a Fiat worker in whose jacket he is found, following a near-fatal kidnapping attempt
2019
Wood, gesso, paint, horsehair, leather, Jesmonite, steel, paper
175 × 58 × 35 cm
- D Clutching an imaginary halberd in his right hand and wearing a mask by the master mask maker Yasuo Miichi based on the halberdier from Giovanni Battista Tiepolo's painting *A Halberdier in a Landscape* (1736–38), the artist looks east
2019
Wood, gesso, paint, horsehair, leather, Jesmonite, steel, iron filings
177 × 60 × 62 cm
- E Manual Transmission
2019
Willow basket, silkscreen print, handmade lightbulb
Dimensions variable
- F Home-made Castiglioni Lamp (Esso Extra)
2018
Oil can, concrete, fishing rod, car headlamp, transformer, cable
184 × 22 × 13.5 cm
- G Home-made Castiglioni Lamp (Treori)
2018
Oil can, concrete, fishing rod, car headlamp, transformer, cable
197 × 19 × 12.5 cm

List of Works Glasgow

Main Gallery

- H Pedigree English Greyhound, Valldemossa dell'Attimo Fuggente (Vera) photographed at Four Studios, Mirafiori Car Plant, Turin
2019
Silver gelatin type LE/Selenium toned print
Image size: 100 × 125 cm / Print size: 105 × 130 cm / Framed size: 107 × 132 cm
- I Pedigree English Greyhounds, Valldemossa dell'Attimo Fuggente (Vera) and Kollaps Livets Dans (Victor) photographed at Four Studios, Mirafiori Car Plant, Turin
2019
Silver gelatin type LE/Selenium toned print
Image size: 100 × 125 cm / Print size: 105 × 130 cm / Framed size: 107 × 132 cm
- J Hand of the Artist's Father, Hand of the Artist, Hand of the Artist's Son
2019
Set of three daguerreotypes on silver-plated copper
Silver plate size: 24 × 19 cm / Framed size: 57.3 × 50.8 cm
- K A–A', B–B' (Archive)
2019

A wickerwork vitrine with steel legs made after a custom-designed roof rack for a Fiat 130 built for Giovanni and Marella Agnelli, 1971
91.5 × 200 × 100 cm

Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, *The Finding of Moses*, 1736–38 (Formerly the left-hand portion of *A Halberdier in a Landscape*)
Collection Scottish National Galleries, Edinburgh
Silver gelatin type LE/Selenium toned print
Image size: 21.8 cm x 37.2 cm / Mounted size: 38.8 × 67.2 cm

Yasuo Miichi's carving stencils for the mask of Giovanni Agnelli

Giambattista Tiepolo, 1696–1770, Monograph (Cut)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York / Harry N. Abrams Inc, New York
30.3 × 13.9 × 2.8 cm / 30.3 × 11.2 × 2.8 cm

A–A', B–B' (Poster), Cut Fragments

Assorted Fiat 125 Special publicity material (Cut)
- L An aside from Dario Fo's play *Trumpets and Raspberries*, 1974, performed on the 6th of September by Jimmy Chisholm and Kath Howden