The Bruce High Quality Foundation, Richard Hamilton, Marcus Harvey, Anton Henning, Robert Longo, Chris Martin, Mark Wright

Mediated Iconography

07 September - 03 October 2012

Pippy Houldsworth Gallery is delighted to present Mediated Iconography, an exhibition that explores the complex relationship and influence of Richard Hamilton's work on the practice of a number of important contemporary artists. Including work by The Bruce High Quality Foundation, Richard Hamilton, Marcus Harvey, Anton Henning, Robert Longo, Chris Martin and Mark Wright, the exhibition creates a contemporary counterpoint to and associations with Hamilton's diverse investigations.

Mediated Iconography takes as its starting point the pictorial and psychological depth of Hamilton's work, wherein he mediates and creates a conversation with found imagery through exploration of traditional tropes in painting including the figure, still life, history and landscape. Hamilton's broad-ranging oeuvre invites us to renegotiate the history and the cultural significance of images and objects. From his deep research into Duchamp's body of work, to his scientific investigations and observations around consumer culture in the seminal exhibitions, Growth and Form, 1951, and Man, Machine & Motion, 1956, both held at the ICA, and This is Tomorrow, shown at the Whitechapel in 1956, Hamilton was deeply interested in the complex of modern life. His piece Picasso's Meninas, 1973, exhibited here, is a layered iconographic tableau where Picasso's styles and characters inhabit Velazquez's courtroom painting. Visualising himself as author of the reinvented spectacle, depicted in the mirror with his wife in place of the Spanish royals, looking back and through histories of painting, Hamilton evokes an ever-present modern desire and consciousness of the image.

Rich with visual and art historical mnemonics, Hamilton's tabular paintings embrace the possibilities of semi-illusionistic space, where he plays simultaneously with the vertical picture's association with the magazine format or computer screen as much as the possibilities of the painted canvas. His work speaks of the assimilation of mass-cultural forms into a fine art tradition, and this transformative moment, where one is invited to visualise the world through the gaze of various forms of modernism, is the psychological and hermeneutic framework that concerns each of the selected contemporary artists, after Hamilton.

The Bruce High Quality Foundation's silkscreen, The Princess, 2012 isolates the image of Infanta Margarita from Velazquez's continuous illusionistic space, inviting us to look at the point at which a painting becomes an image, and how in turn an artwork is consumed. As in Marcus Harvey's The Attendant (Black and White), 2010, and Robert Longo's Study of Kiss Guitarist (Ace), 2012, BHQF's piece explores the category of the figure. Like Hamilton, each artist reflects on the gesture of producing an image within this and other traditional genres, exploring values within them. Harvey's work investigates, through the materiality of painting, its relationship to the photographic, to the digital image and to painting's own history. Also photographically based, Longo's work explores the power of the image in contemporary society, using drawing to evoke a complex psychological state and a socially charged moment. Longo explores what Hamilton called 'ironies of affirmation' – where value and taste become the subject matter of Longo's drawing of Ace the guitarist, or Hamilton's homage to the Braun toaster. Mark Wright translates a 1950s landscape postcard through the lens of nineteenth century romanticism, with a nod to modern romanticism in Ed Ruscha and Hamilton himself. Hamilton's characteristic abstract use of

newspaper and magazine layouts take on a musical and ‘gimmicky’ character, also firmly indebted to his pseudo-manifesto about Pop Art, in Chris Martin’s piece Nothing But Love.., 2007-2011. Anton Henning works within the framework of the interior, where his painterly composition, Interieur No. 83, 2001, slips into and out of abstract space. The simultaneously familiar and otherworldly space in Henning’s painting, together with his unironic exploration of Van Gogh, through Lichtenstein, again, draws us back to Hamilton. Each of the works brought together for Mediated Iconography explore and conceptualise the tableau tradition, after Hamilton, where information and image are combined to communicate ideas about and through popular visual culture.

Richard Hamilton

Richard Hamilton (1922-2011) was a pioneer of Pop Art. His collage Just what is it that makes today’s homes so different, so appealing?, 1956, became known as the ‘cover image’ of Pop Art, and the attributes of Pop he itemised in a letter of 1957 to the architects Peter and Alison Smithson; ‘Popular, Transient, Expendable, Low cost…Glamorous, Big business’, are key to understanding a moment where art meets mass-cultural forms. A critical extension of Hamilton's practice was the shows he organised with the Independent Group, a gathering of artists, architects and writers including the Smithsons, Eduardo Paolozzi, Nigel Henderson and Lawrence Alloway, which he co-founded at the ICA, London. Together with the Independent Group he organised numerous important exhibitions at the ICA including Growth and Form, 1951 and Man, Machine & Motion, 1955.

Throughout his career Hamilton exhibited internationally at venues including Tate, London; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; MACBA, Barcelona; San Francisco Musem of Modern Art; The British Museum, London; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; and Serpentine Gallery, London. More recently a posthumous retrospective was shown at Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane, 2011-12, and an exhibition, The Late Works, opens at the National Gallery, London in October 2012. The major forthcoming Richard Hamilton exhibition tour curated by Paul Schimmel and Vicente Todolí is scheduled to travel to the Tate Modern, London; and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid.

The Bruce High Quality Foundation

The Bruce High Quality Foundation is an artist collective based in New York, established in 2004, and has instigated numerous projects including The Bruce High Quality Foundation University; the Brucennial; and Teach 4 Amerika, A Rally for Anarchy in Arts Education, USA. The collective has had recent solo shows including Lever House Art Collection, New York; Galerie Bruno Bischofberger, Zurich; Susan Inglett Gallery, New York; W Hotel, Miami Beach; and an off-site exhibition in Berlin presented by 20 Projects, Vito Schnabel and Contemporary Fine Arts. Recent group exhibitions include PS1, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris, and the 2010 Whitney Biennial. The Bruce High Quality Foundation was ranked 99 in Art Review’s 2010 guide to the 100 most powerful figures in contemporary art.

Marcus Harvey

Marcus Harvey has had solo exhibitions at White Cube, London; Galerie Alex Daniels, Amsterdam; Galleria Marabini, Bologna; Mimmo Scognamiglio, Naples; Mary Boone, Gallery, New York; Tanya Bonakdar, New York. He has also participated in several important group exhibitions including Some Went Mad, Some Ran Away, Serpentine Gallery, London, 1994, Sensation, Royal Academy, London, 1997, and In the darkest hour there may be light: Works from Damien Hirst’s murderme collection, Serpentine Gallery, London, 2007.

Anton Henning

Anton Henning has recently had solo exhibitions at Klaus Gerrit Friese, Stuttgart; Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica; Bob van Orsouw, Zurich; ARNDT, Berlin; Kunstmuseum Krefeld; and Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh. Recent group shows include Blain|Southern, London; Museum Abtei Liesborn, Wadersloh-Liesborn; Wlhelm-Hack Museum, Ludwigshafen; Arp Museum Rolandseck and Mseu de Arte de Sao Paulo, Brazil. His work is represented in museum collections including Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Frieder Burda Museum, Baden-Baden; Gemeentemuseum Den Haag; Krefelder Kunstmuseen, Krefeld; LA County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; MOCA, Los Angeles; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main; National Museum of Art, Osaka; Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main; and Hammer Museum, Los Angeles.

Robert Longo

Robert Longo has had retrospective exhibitions at Hamburger Kunstverein and Deichtorhallen; Menil Collection, Houston; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Hartford Athenaeum and Isetan Museum of Art, Tokyo. Group exhibitions include Documenta (1987 and 1982); the Whitney Biennial (2004 and 1983); and the Venice Biennale (1997). His work is represented in collections including the Museum of Modern Art; Guggenheim Museum, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; and Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. Robert Longo was the recipient of the Goslar Kaiserring in 2005.

Chris Martin

Recent solo shows include Galerie Rodolphe Janssen, Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York; The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC; Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf; and Nerman museum, Kansas City. Martin has taken part in notable groups exhibitions including an extensive survey of new abstract painting from America, Abstract America, at the Saatchi Gallery, London. Work by the artist has been included in a number of group exhibitions, including La Jolla museum of Contemporary Art, California; PS1 Contemporary Art Center, New York; Deutsche Bank Gallery, New York; and Daniel Weinberg Gallery, Los Angeles. Martin's works are included in prominent American collections, including the Nerman Museum, Kansas City; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Albright Knox Art Gallery Buffalo; The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; and Denver Art Museum, Denver.

Mark Wright

Mark Wright has been included in major exhibitions including Wellcome Trust, London; Museum of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates; Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; and Cornerhouse, Manchester. His work is represented in collections including the David Roberts Collection, London; Deutsche Bank, London; Dundee Museums Collection, Dundee; and Wellcome Trust, London.

With thanks to Mark Wright for his help in developing this exhibition.

Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 10-6, Sat 10-4.
For information or images, please contact Claire Nichols on +44 (0)20 7734 7760 or claire@houldsworth.co.uk

Upcoming:

Francesca DiMattio
Bloemenhouder and Kandelaar, 10 October - 17 November 2012
Private View: Tuesday 9 October 2012, 6-8pm
Champagne Brunch: Saturday 13 October 2012, 9.30am-12pm

Kirstine Roepstorff
New Works, 23 November – 12 January 2012