

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

27 May 2011

PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

VIA FRANCESCO CRISPI 16

00187 ROME ITALY

GALLERY HOURS:

FROM 30 MAY:

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Tue – Sat: 10:30am–7:00pm and by appointment

Monday - Friday 10.30am – 7pm or by appointment



MADE IN ITALY

Friday 27 May – Friday 29 July, 2011

Opening Reception: Friday 27 May, from 6-8pm

Say what ill of it you may; (Italy) still remains to the poet the land of his predilection, to the artist the land of his necessity, and to all the land of dreams and visions of delight.

Henry W. Longfellow (1807 -1882)

Gagosian Gallery Rome is pleased to present *Made in Italy*, a group show marking the 150th anniversary of Italy's unification.

The exhibition maps an unexpected Italian journey through works by seminal artists of the past sixty years: Georg Baselitz, Jean Michel Basquiat, Joseph Beuys, Dike Blair, Marcel Duchamp, Alberto Giacometti, Douglas Gordon, Andreas Gursky, Damien Hirst, Howard Hodgkin, Mike Kelley, Jeff Koons, Louise Lawler, Roy Lichtenstein, Richard Prince, Robert Rauschenberg, Gerhard Richter, Richard Serra, Cindy Sherman, David Smith, Thomas Struth, Cy Twombly, Andy Warhol, and Lawrence Weiner.

The irresistible appeal of Italy for international artists is deeply rooted in history. In the tradition of the Grand Tour of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, British, American, French and German travelers crossed the Alps to witness what they had previously only experienced in books; the wonders of the classical tradition, the masterpieces of an idealized past, as well as the thrill that the distinct Italian lifestyle and customs kindled. Immersing themselves in the marvels of the past and the harmonious disarray of the present, artists from near and far negotiated the trials and tribulations of early tourism. From Venice's Byzantine exoticism, the cerebral sensuality of the Florentine Renaissance, and the beguiling vestiges of classical Rome, Italy became an inspiring artistic idea and ideal. This infatuation continued into the twentieth century, during which tourism became easier and accessible to many. The animated cities or pastoral idylls of Italy remain a rite of passage in the careers of many contemporary artists.

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Three hundred years from the inception of this tradition, the Italian experience – from its unrivaled art-historical wealth to the kaleidoscopic quality of daily life – has remained of vital relevance to modern and contemporary artistic production. The oeuvres of Leonardo da Vinci, Giorgio De Chirico, and Caravaggio have been interpreted by Marcel Duchamp, Andy Warhol, and Cindy Sherman while archeology has fuelled the imaginations of Roy Lichtenstein and Jean-Michel Basquiat; the totality of modern landscapes have been interpreted by Gerhard Richter and Andreas Gursky; Alberto Giacometti and Jeff Koons have treated the female canon while Joseph Beuys, Mike Kelley, and Richard Serra have been inspired by key cultural figures or episodes of the contemporary period.

'Italy, or rather, the many civilizations which emerged over the centuries in the cities and territories that we have come to call Italy, constitutes a unique example of historical and artistic cohesion', explains Mario Codognato, curator of the exhibition. 'This particularity has made it a point of reference, and of both attraction and conflict, for visual artists in the Western world. Italy is past and present; archeology and contemporary creativity. Its two distinct identities conflate the weight of tradition with the contradictions of modernity.'

With key works by some of the greatest modern and contemporary artists, *Made in Italy* will reconstruct the personal and creative journeys that brought them at specific moments in their careers into direct confrontation with this universal legacy called Italy.

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Front image: Andy Warhol, *The Two Sisters (After de Chirico)*, 1982. Private Collection. Courtesy Gagosian Gallery. © 2011 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. By SIAE 2011