

MASSIMODECARLO

JIM SHAW

Massimo De Carlo is pleased to present a new solo exhibition by the American artist Jim Shaw in the gallery spaces of Via Ventura 5 in Milan.

Jim Shaw is a Michigan born and Los Angeles based artist that has become one of the most influential American contemporary artists, renowned for his imaginative, inventive and especially diverse practice – that encompasses different media from painting to sculpture. Jim Shaw's creations are characterized by the artists' idiosyncratic approach – where obscure iconography meets craftsmanship – to the reality that surrounds him: each work synthesises the vernacular and the exceptional, mysticism and realism, creating a visual aesthetic that challenges America's puritan and radical underbelly. The artist is like a shamanic puppet master that infuses American cartoons with the pathos of archaic myths and eerie semi-religious energy.

The black and white body of work presented in the exhibition is rooted in the artists' interest in the erotic content of historic painting and the related aspects of superhero comics. In this new series of ink line drawings Jim Shaw applies the aesthetics of the early 1960's DC superhero comics (focusing on the expressionist elements of the comics such as representations of explosions, speed and forces of nature) to the notion of heroic paintings with mythological and biblical subjects that vary from the battle between the Egyptian gods Horus and Seth to the parable of Jacob's wrestling with God and being renamed Israel.

The smaller panels on show are drawn from details of the larger paintings, transforming these details in to pure abstractions, whilst other four panels depict – on a background of smeared cartoon imagery – painted man-machine hybrids. As put by the artist himself: " I do believe, in at least a metaphoric level, that the union of human and machine, represented best by smart phone addiction, embodies the "Anti- Christ" as believed in by esoteric societies as a figure that is as crucial to the present epoch, the Aquarian age, as Christ was to the past era, the age of Pisces."

The exhibition is an immersion into a dystopian yet genuinely realistic universe where the artist channels through abstraction and figurative representation the connection between past and present, bordering between heroic and apocalyptic.

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Jim Shaw was born in Midland, Michigan in 1952. He currently lives and works in Los Angeles. Solo exhibitions include: *The End is Here*, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, USA (2015); Catalogue; *The Hidden World. Jim Shaw / Didactic Art Collection*, Centre Dürrenmatt, Neuchâtel, CH (2014); *Jim Shaw*, The Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK (2012); *Jim Shaw: Fumetto*, International Comix-Festival Luzern, Kunstmuseum Luzern, Luzern, CH (2011); *Jim Shaw. Left Behind* curated by Charlotte Laubard, CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain, Bordeaux, F (2010). His work has been exhibited internationally in prominent institutions such as: *Poïpoi: Une Collection Privée à Monaco*, curated by Cristiano Raimondi, Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, Monaco, MC (2017); *The Making of Personal Theory: Mysticism and Metaphysics in the Work of Sara Kathryn Arledge, Charles Irvin, and Jim Shaw*, Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, USA (2015); *La La La Human Steps*, Museum Boljmans, Rotterdam, NL (2015); *One Torino: Shit and Die*, curated by Maurizio Cattelan, Palazzo Cavour, Turin, I (2014). Jim Shaw's work was exhibited at the 53° *Biennale di Venezia - Il Palazzo Enciclopedico*, curated by Massimiliano Gioni, La Biennale di Venezia, Giardini - Arsenale, Venice, Italy (2013).

Hard Facts:

Massimo De Carlo, Milano

Via Ventura 5, 20134 Milano

Private View Wednesday 29th of March 2017, from 6pm to 9pm

Open from the 30th of March to the 29th of April 2017, from Tuesday to Saturday, from 11am to 7pm

For further information and materials:

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