



PRESS RELEASE

Collaborations. Warhol-Basquiat-Clemente

Curator: Tilman Osterwold
Opening: Thursday 17 October 1996
Period: 18 October 1996 - 19 January 1997
Catalogue: Cantz

Between 1984 and 1985, Andy Warhol, the master of American Pop Art, collaborated with Jean-Michel Basquiat and Francesco Clemente, two leading lights of the Neo-expressionist painting movement typical of the Eighties, to produce a series of paintings. Whether the works are produced by two or by all three of the artists, the characteristic language of each one is clearly recognisable. Warhol contributes images taken from the world of advertising. Basquiat portrays personalities in a style charged with energy, while Clemente imbues his portraits with a melancholy and mysterious air. Considered some of the most innovative artists of the Eighties due to the expressive language used, the works they completed together are now exhibited in full: the exhibition includes thirty works by Warhol-Basquiat, about ten works by Warhol-Basquiat-Clemente and others by Basquiat-Clemente.

Bertrand Lavier

Curators: Ida Gianelli, Giorgio Verzotti
Opening: Thursday 17 October 1996
Period: 18 October 1996 - 12 January 1997
Catalogue: Charta

Lavier was born in 1949 in Châtillon-sur-Seine, France and now lives and works in Aignay-le-Duc. The artist first appeared on the scene at the end of the Seventies when his works marked a departure from the current prevailing pictorial, Neo-expressionist trend. Lavier chose to work not only with items in daily use (reminiscent of Ready Made Art and Nouveau Réalisme) but also with paint finish to set up a subtle interplay of estrangement and alienation, emblematic tokens of our time.

This retrospective exhibition, curated by Ida Gianelli and Giorgio Verzotti, proposes a selection of work completed from the end of the Seventies to the present day. These include works produced using superimposed objects (a refrigerator on a safe, a chair on a refrigerator), others inspired by Walt Disney cartoons and also *Ready-destroyed*: cars and motor-bikes destroyed in accidents. The artist's most recent work is represented by items of enormous size such as *Dolly*, an immense hot-air balloon shown deflated and placed on the floor.



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EXHIBITION

COLLABORATIONS

WARHOL-BASQUIAT-CLEMENTE

CURATOR

TILMAN OSTERWOLD

PRESS OFFICE

MASSIMO MELOTTI

OPENING

THURSDAY 17 OCTOBER 1996

PERIOD

18 OCTOBER 1996 - 19 JANUARY 1997

MUSEUM HOURS

TUESDAY TO FRIDAY 10am-5pm.

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY 10am-7pm

THE FIRST AND THIRD THURSDAY OF EACH
MONTH 10am-10pm

MONDAY CLOSED

EXHIBITION SITE

CASTELLO DI RIVOLI

MUSEO D'ARTE CONTEMPORANEA

PIAZZA DEL CASTELLO

10098 RIVOLI (TORINO)

CATALOGUE

CANTZ

The Exhibition

Between 1984 and 1985, Andy Warhol, the master of American Pop Art, worked together with Jean-Michel Basquiat and Francesco Clemente, two leading lights of the typically Eighties neo-expressionist painting movement, to produce a series of paintings in collaboration. In works produced by two or all three of the artists in conjunction, the characteristic language of each one is clearly identifiable. Warhol contributes images taken from the world of advertising. Basquiat portrays personalities style charged with energy, while Clemente imbues his portraits with a melancholy and mysterious air. The exhibition sets out to provide an exhaustive overview of this important collaboration and includes thirty works by Warhol-Basquiat, about ten works by Warhol-Basquiat-Clemente and others by Basquiat-Clemente.

The Artists

Jean-Michel Basquiat (New York, 1960-1988) first started out as a graffiti artist, a movement particularly widespread at the end of the Seventies in American cities, and then went on to transfer the themes and forms which preoccupied him to canvas. The artist began by applying the name SAMO to spray painted graffiti produced on the outskirts of Manhattan. Critics and the art market soon grew more and more interested in what became known as the "Basquiat phenomenon". He became part of the artistic entourage which gravitated around Club 57 in New York: this included such luminaries as Madonna, Keith Haring and Andy Warhol. The international art world hailed him as one of the most promising new artists to hit the scene. In 1982, he was invited to the seventh edition of *Documenta* in Kassel at the age of just twenty-one. His work is reminiscent of children's painting, *Art Brut* and *Action Painting*. Despite their great simplicity, the minimal, elementary markings which are a feature of all his works, are charged with great power to express and provoke.

His friendship with Andy Warhol really took off in 1983 and Bruno Bischofberger organised the exhibition *Collaborations* in November of the same year. This presented work by Warhol, Basquiat and Clemente, with two or all three artists contributing to individual works. In 1988, Jean-Michel Basquiat died of a heroin overdose at the age of only 27.

Francesco Clemente was born in Naples in 1952. He lives and works between Rome, India and New York. He became well-known at the end of the Seventies, when he joined the Transavanguardia movement created and promoted by Achille Bonito Oliva. He contributed to the main exhibitions arranged by the group, including *Transavanguardia Italia/America* (1982), which included work by Jean-Michel Basquiat. His work has been defined "kaleidoscopic". Clemente's nomadic lifestyle is reflected by his nomadic style of painting. The artist uses different methods: painting, frescoes, photography and graphic design. His artistic themes encompass autobiographical motifs and also symbolism: sexual, erotic and mystical aspects are rendered with great expressive balance and the freshness of image which constitutes his trademark. In the past, Clemente had also collaborated on individual works with other artists. He worked on the same pieces with traditional artists in India in 1981 before moving to New York. Later, he created illuminated manuscripts with American poets such as Allen Ginsberg, Harry Matthews and John Weiners. The work produced with Warhol and Basquiat is in keeping with Clemente's general philosophy, as expressed Marc Francis, "every artist is free to draw on a vast common fund of pre-existing styles and images, reelaborated by his own hand".

Andy Warhol (Pittsburgh 1928 - New York 1987) is considered the master of American Pop Art and one of the most important artistic personalities of our time.

Warhol saw the serial repetition of images through technical means not simply as a method of production but a means by which his work could acquire fundamental theoretical value: "The reason I paint this way is because I want to be a machine, and I feel that when I do something and I do it as if I were a machine I obtain the result I want". A guru of New York culture, the big apple of the advertising and mass media world, Warhol and his work were responsible not only for bringing about a drastic change in contemporary art but also for influencing customs and use of images. His *Campbell's soup*, *Green Coca Cola bottles*, *Dollar Signs* and portraits of famous personalities became icons of contemporary society. He wrote about his collaboration with Basquiat in a diary entry: "Monday, 16 April 1984 (...) At five to six I produced one of my series of Dog paintings in five minutes. I had a photo and used a machine to project the image onto the wall. I put the paper where the image fell and traced over it. First I drew it and then I painted it, like Jean-Michel. I think that the paintings we work on together are better when it is impossible to tell who has done which part (...)".

One year after his death, the Museum of Modern Art in New York organised a big retrospective exhibition devoted to his work. This itinerant show travelled to the Art Institute in Chicago, the Hayward Gallery in London, the Ludwig Museum in Cologne, Palazzo Grassi in Venice and the Musée National d'Art Moderne in the Georges Pompidou Centre, Paris.

Texts from the catalogue

Reflections on and experiences with Basquiat, Clemente and Warhol

by Bruno Bischofberger

(...) To get the most spontaneous work into the collaborations I suggested to Basquiat that every artist should, without conferring with the others about iconography, style, size, technique etc., independently start the paintings, of course in the knowledge that two further artists would be working on the same canvas, and that enough mental and physical space should be left to accommodate them. I further suggested to him that each artist send one half of the started collaborations to each of the other artists and the works then be passed on to the remaining artist whose work was still missing. Basquiat liked my proposal and agreed. On my next visit to New York I suggested the whole project to Andy Warhol and also to Francesco Clemente. Both found it interesting and surely a new challenge and soon started on their work. (...)

From A to B to C and Back Again

Collaborations between Andy Warhol , Jean-Michel Basquiat and Francesco Clemente

By Marc Francis

(...) The collaboration which was proposed in 1984 between Andy Warhol, Jean-Michel Basquiat, and Francesco Clemente, in which three groups of four paintings would be passed between the New York studios of each artist, with each one adding to, erasing, or overlaying the work of another, was a competitive game. Artistic style became the issue between them, as well as the personal relationships, generational differences, and widely disparate cultural backgrounds of each artist. Calculated risks were also at stake, because any contribution one artist were to make could be cancelled by the next player. The form of the game may have been suggested by the ancient children's game (taken up by the Surrealists in the 1930s), the *cadavre exquis*, in which the head, torso, and limbs of a prototypical body were divided up sequentially and separately imagined by different players in ignorance of the images created by the other artists. In the case of these paintings however, images were superimposed, as a part of the painting was not hidden from view.

In contrast to the hidden elements characteristic of this games, or of most card games, these triangulated collaborative paintings exhibit only too clearly the marks and strategies of the previous artist. Trumping is not an option, because the objective is not to surpass or beat the others. These paintings are not, therefore, a form of laying false trails, such as Marcel Duchamp's professed preference for playing chess over making art. Rather, it is a form of "working out", even more precisely of boxing, the dancing, feinting, ducking, punching art whose exemplar from the 1960s onward remains Muhammad Ali, the poet of the ring. (...)

Painting the Third Mind

By Keith Haring

(...) Jean-Michel and Andy had achieved a healthy balance. Jean respected Andy's philosophy and was in awe of his accomplishments and mastery of colour and images. Andy was amazed by the ease with which Jean composed and constructed his paintings, and was constantly surprised by the never-ending flow of new ideas. Each one inspired the other to outdo the next. The collaborations were seemingly effortless. It was a physical conversation happening in paint instead of words. The sense of humour, the snide remarks, the profound realizations, the simple chit-chat all happened with paint and brushes. I visited them at the Factory several times while they were painting together. The atmosphere was playful and intense at the same time. Jean-Michel's painting posture and disregard for technique created a mood of unnerving spectacle. There was a sense that one was watching something being unveiled and discovered for the first time. Andy was intrigued and intimidated at the same time. It seemed to push him to new heights. Andy returned to painting with beautiful, delicate lines, carefully laid onto the canvas. The drips and gestures immediately reminded me of the earliest Warhol paintings I had seen. The new scale had forced him to develop an even richer draftmanship. The lines flowed onto the canvas. (...)

Final Draft

By Peter Halley

(...) Finally, perhaps the richest aspect of these collaborations is their conversational quality and the respect each artist maintains for the very different point-of-view of his partner. We usually think of a collaboration as a creative act by which two people of similar persuasion work to achieve a unified and synthetic result. In the case of Basquiat and Warhol, collaboration is about dialogue and difference. Each artist steadfastly maintains his ideological and stylistic point of view. The play between the two men of dramatically different cultural heritages speaking to each other through the language of modernism is the unique achievement of these works. (...)

Works in Exhibition

Warhol-Basquiat

Arm and Hammer II, 1985

Perishable, 1984

Chair, 1985

Lobster, 1985

White Lobster, 1985

Collaboration, 1985

Pink Lobster, 1985

Number 1, 1984

Don't Tread on Me, 1985

Clearboy, 1985

Bananas, 1984

Keep frozen, 1985

General Electric - White, 1984

Polizia, 1985

Aging Ali in Flight of Life, 1984

Drug King, 1984

Socialite, 1984

Zenith, 1985

Florida, 1984

Paramount, 1984

Olympics, 1984

Cabbage, 1985

El Jeffe, 1984

Stoves, 1985

Dogs, 1985

Don't Tread Tennis, 1985

Motorbike, 1985

Eggs, 1985

China, 1984

Third Eye, 1985

Sin more, 1985

Casa del popolo, 1984

Warhol-Basquiat-Clemente

Saxophone, 1984

Cilindrone, 1985

Pure, 1984

Pole Star, 1984

Pimple Head, 1984

Premonition, 1984

Hand Ball, 1985

Alba's Breakfast, 1984

Basquiat-Clemente

Number Five, 1984

Kiss, 1984



CASTELLO DI RIVOLI

Museo d'Arte Contemporanea

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BERTRAND LAVIER

CURATORS

IDA GIANELLI AND GIORGIO VERZOTTI

PRESS OFFICE

MASSIMO MELOTTI

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CHARTA

The Exhibition

The selection of works included in this retrospective exhibition document the French artist's career from the end of the Seventies to the present day.

The chronological starting point is the installation entitled *Polished* dating from 1976. This work marks an important point of transition between Lavier's previous mainly photographic works and what was to become his major body of works: this later work, based on sculptures and objects, brought him to the attention of the international art world. The artist's best-known works take the form of everyday items covered by dense paint or sculptures. These are produced by simply superimposing two different objects. This juxtaposition forms a recurrent theme of his work.

The exhibition includes works such as *Lavier/Morellet*, *Tennis/Volley-ball*, *Brandt/Haffner* (a refrigerator on a safe). These were produced in the Eighties and are intended to stand as an ironic comment on the entire modernist debate over sculpture and its position in space. Thematic cycles are also exhibited. These include reproductions taken from Walt Disney cartoons, which were produced partly between 1984 and 1990, and partly in 1994 through the use of computer-aided design. Other works include the *Relief-Peinture* cycle produced in different years (1988 and 1991), based on the disorientating juxtaposition between an object (the wall of a prefabricated house) and its exact photographic reproduction. Another cycle in the *Ready-made Primitif* mould (from 1994) gives us everyday objects mounted on the pedestals usually reserved for sculpture. *Nobilis* (1985) is an example of Lavier's environmental installations. In this work, the walls of the space are altered by the application of wallpaper. The exhibition also includes works described by the artist as *Ready-destroyed*. These comprise large objects such as cars or motorcycles destroyed in accidents and exhibited in the state in which they were found. One recent work, in particular, indicates the new direction in which the artist is moving. His re-interpretation of the *Ready-made* tradition involves the use of enormous objects to produce a perturbing and almost dream-like effect: *Dolly* (1993) is a real hot air balloon shown unexpectedly deflated and laid out on the floor. The exhibition also includes an installation specially produced by Bertrand Lavier for an area within the Castello di Rivoli.

Biography

Bertrand Lavier was born in 1949, in Chatillon-sur-Seine, and with the exception of brief periods in Dijon and Paris, spent his early years in Aignay-le-Duc, a village in Burgundy. He attended an agricultural college for four years, but even before completing his studies there he began devoting himself to artistic pursuits. His early work was influenced, first by late Sixties experimental art, particularly Land Art, as seen in his interventions in the natural environment, and then by early Seventies conceptual and behavioral work, reflected in his pieces that document mental processes or actions in real time and space. Lavier's inclusion in the 1971 Paris Biennale marked his first participation in a major survey show; on this occasion he proposed that the public travel by bateau-mouche to visit the city's monuments. Even these early pieces reflected his interest in the relationship between reality and the tools used to represent it, both visual art (painting, sculpture, photography) and verbal language. The relationship between words and things, filtered through the pictorial practice, is the basis for his series entitled *Landscape Painting and Beyond*, as well as his paintings made up of juxtapositions of two colors that are called by the same name, but, being industrially produced by different paint companies, end up being different. His work soon attracted notice in the art world, and one of his first solo exhibitions, organized by Pierre Restany, was in Paris in 1975, at the Centre National d'Art Contemporain; this was soon followed by other shows at important galleries in the French capital. He also participated in numerous group exhibitions of new French art. During the early Eighties his work took a decisive turn, with his exhibition of everyday objects entirely covered in densely brushed paint. His poetics transcend the merely formal arrangement of art made of objects and becomes a theoretical reflection that questions agreed upon artistic codes. With these pieces, which began reaching a wider public in the mid-Eighties, a period when the heretofore predominant Neo-expressionist movement in painting was in decline, Lavier started to gain an international reputation. Analogous, perhaps even greater, interest was shown his superimposed objects,

which he began making in 1984. This work emerged from a deliberately provocative confrontation between the dignified language of sculpture and the world of the anonymous forms of objects, where a refrigerator can be elected to the status of a sculpted work and be exhibited on top of a safe, or relegated to the function of a pedestal and be placed beneath a plastic chair. At this point Lavier was exhibiting at private galleries in Europe and the United States, and he was being included in important shows focusing on current art, such as *Documenta 7* and *Documenta 8* (Kassel, 1982 and 1987), the Sydney Biennale (1982, 1986, 1992), the Sao Paulo Biennale (Brazil, 1985), *New Art* at the Tate Gallery (London, 1983), *International Survey of Painting and Sculpture* at the Museum of Modern Art (New York, 1986), *Prospekt* at the Schirn Kunsthalle (Frankfurt), *Sonsbeek* (Arnhem, Holland, 1986), and *L'Epoque la Mode, la Morale, la Passion* at the Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris, 1987). During this period he also had numerous museum retrospectives, ranging from the Nouveau Musée in Villeurbanne-Lyons (1983-1984) to the Kunsthalle (Berne, 1984), the Arc-Musée d'art modern de la Ville de Paris (1985), *Le Consortium*, at the Musée des Beaux-Arts (Dijon, 1986), the Musée de Peinture et de Sculpture (Grenoble, 1987), and finally the Musée national d'art moderne Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris, 1991).

At the close of the Eighties Lavier was one of the most well known French artists outside France, where he is considered one of the most interesting and influential artists in recent decades. In recent years his work has been in numerous survey shows, including *Object for the Ideal Home*, on the legacy of Pop Art, at the Serpentine Gallery in London (1991), *Territorium Artis*, an exhibition dedicated to artists and works that have changed the course of the history of modern art, at the Kunsthalle in Bonn (1992), *Der zerbrochene Spiegel*, at the Deichtorhallen in Hamburg (1993), and the first Johannesburg Biennale, in South Africa (1995). In the latter exhibition, Lavier showed his most recent series of works for the first time -- "ready made primitifs," everyday objects placed on iron bases in the manner of objects in an ethnographic museum, in a new reversal of the most prevalent criteria for attributing value in our culture.

Works in Exhibition

Polished, 1976

Or not to be, 1978

Erebi, 1983

Golden Brot, 1983

Harvey, 1983

Peinture blanche, 1983

Brandt

Haffner, 1984

Walt Disney Productions 1947-1985 n.5, 1985

Walt Disney Productions 1947-1985 n. 6, 1985

Walt Disney Productions 1947-1985 n. 4, 1985

Nobilis, 1985

Crimson, 1986

Paragon, 1986

Socle de peinture rouge, 1986

Tennis

Volley-Ball, 1987

Walt Disney Productions 1947-1987 n. 14, 1987

Panton

Zanussi, 1988

Relief-Peinture n. 2, 1988

Candy

Fichet-Bauche, 1989

Donnay n. 1, 1989

Intervoile, 1989

Walt Disney Productions 1947-1990 n. 8, 1990

Wal Disney Productions 1947-1990 n.9, 1990

Frigeco, 1991

Giudecca, 1991

Sanijura, 1982

Pleyel, 1991

Relief-Peinture n. 2, 1991

Rouge Bordeaux par Astral et Ripolin, 1992

Walt Disney Productions 1947-1992 n. 13, 1992

64

100, 1992

Dolly, 1993

Giulietta, 1993

328 GTB, 1993

Bendix, 1994

Girod, 1994

JMB Classique, 1994

Teddy, 1994

Walt Disney Productions 1947-1994, 1994

Walt Disney Productions 1947-1994, 1994

Chack Mc Truck, 1995

Doras, 1995

Walt Disney Productions 1947-1995, 1995

Photo-Relief, 1996

Walt Disney Productions 1947-1996, 1996

Composition bleu et jaune (détail), 1988-96

Uni.Mas, 1996

Fenêtre, 1982-96

Lavier

Morellet, 1975-85-96