

BRAND NEW GALLERY

presents

DEBORAH KASS: ART HISTORIES

DEBORAH KASS

SEPTEMBER 22 | NOVEMBER 12, 2016

OPENING SEPTEMBER 22, 2016 FROM 7-9 PM



Brand New Gallery is pleased to present *Deborah Kass: Art Histories*, the artist's first solo show in Italy. The exhibition will feature a group works from the most interesting series the artist realized during her long career.

In 1992 Kass began *The Warhol Project*. Using Andy Warhol's technical and stylistic language to represent figures in many cases no less iconic, Kass nevertheless turned Warhol's ambivalent relationship to popular culture on its head by choosing subjects that had an explicitly personal and political relationship to her own cultural interests. Kass painted artists and art historians that were her "heroes" in the vein of Warhol's celebrities. Her *My Elvis* series speaks to gender and ethnic identity by replacing Warhol's Elvis with Barbra Streisand from *Yentl*: a 1983 film in which Streisand plays a Jewish woman who dresses and lives as a man in order to receive an education in the Talmudic Law. In *My Elvis*, Kass states her concerns about gender relations, promotes feminist advocacy in society, and directly challenges patriarchy.

Kass's *Self Portraits* as Warhol nod to the act of drag performed in her all appropriation of Warhol's work (*Blue Deb*, 2000).

In The *Jewish Jackie Series* (1992–93), Kass borrowed Warhol's checkerboard-like compositions and inserted in the rectangles repeated Barbra Streisand (a photograph of whose head in profile with the nose held high) in place of his Jackies, Marilyns, or Judys.

In 2002, Kass began a new body of work, *Feel Good Paintings for Feel Bad Times*, inspired, in part, by her reaction to the Bush administration. These works combine stylistic devices from a wide variety of post-war painting, including Ellsworth Kelly, Frank Stella, Jackson Pollock, Andy Warhol, and Ed Ruscha, along with lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, Laura Nyro, and Sylvester, among others, pulling from popular music, Broadway show tunes, the Great American Songbook, Yiddish, and film. The paintings view American art and culture of the last century through the lens of that time period's outpouring of creativity that was the result of post-war optimism, a burgeoning middle class, and democratic values. Responding to the uncertain political and ecological climate of the new century in which they have been made, Kass's work looks back on the 20th century critically and simultaneously with great nostalgia, throwing the present into high relief. Drawing from the divergent realms of art history, popular culture, political realities, and her own political and philosophical reflection, the artist continues into the present the explorations that have characterized her paintings since the 1980s in these new hybrid textual and visual works.

Deborah Kass has recently declared her support for Democratic presidential contender Hillary Clinton with a bold, Andy Warhol-style artwork. Under the face of Donald Trump, Kass has scrawled the words "Vote Hillary." The work mimics Warhol's iconic screenprint *Vote McGovern* (1972), where the title words, urging viewers to support Democratic presidential nominee George McGovern, appear under the face of Republican incumbent Richard Nixon. *Vote Hillary* was produced to raise funds for the Clinton campaign, along with another edition by her fellow renowned artist and Hillary supporter, Chuck Close.

BRAND NEW GALLERY

via Farini 32, 20159 Milano

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from Tuesday to Saturday

11.00am-1.00pm|2.30-7.00pm

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→ Deborah Kass

(b. 1952, San Antonio, TX) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Kass's work is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, The Jewish Museum and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The New Orleans Museum of Art, and the National Portrait Gallery, among others.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Smile!*, Shin Gallery (New York, NY, 2016); *No Kidding*, Paul Kasmin Gallery (New York, NY, 2015); *OY/YO*, Brooklyn, Bridge Park (Brooklyn, NY, 2015); *Deborah Kass: Feel Good Paintings for Feel Bad Times*, Arthur Roger Gallery (New Orleans, LA, 2014); *My Elvis +*, Paul Kasmin Gallery (New York, NY, 2013); *Deborah Kass: Before and Happily Ever After, a Mid-Career Retrospective*, Andy Warhol Museum (Pittsburgh, PA, 2012). Recent group shows include: *A Deeper Dive*, Leslie Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art (New York, NY, 2016); *Art Aids America*, Bronx Museum, Bronx (NY, 2016); *No Man's Land, Women Artists from the Rubell Family Collection*, The Rubell Family Collection (Miami, FL, 2015); *Eye Pop: The Celebrity Gaze*, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institute (Washington, DC, 2015); *Art Aids America*, Tacoma Museum (Tacoma, WA, 2015); *Kanibalizm? Cannibalism? On Appropriation in Art*, Zacheta-National Gallery of Art (Warsaw, PL, 2015); *Global Positioning Systems*, Pérez Art Museum (Miami, FL, 2014); *I, You, We*, The Whitney Museum of American Art (New York, NY, 2013); *Beg, Borrow, and Steal*, Palm Springs Art Museum (Palm Springs, CA, 2013); *Regarding Warhol: Sixty Artists, Fifty Years*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, NY, 2012); *We The People*, The Rauschenberg Foundation (New York, NY, 2012); *Larger Than Life: A Century of Hollywood*, Jewish Museum (Wien, AT, 2012).

In 2014, Kass was inducted into the New York Foundation for the Arts' Hall of Fame. She is a member of the Board of the Andy Warhol Foundation and is Senior Critic of the Yale University MFA Painting Program.

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