

Richard Deacon

Association

29 Bell Street

11 May – 23 June 2012

Lisson Gallery is delighted to announce an exhibition of new work by British artist, Richard Deacon; one of the most important and influential sculptors working today.

Throughout his practice, Deacon has employed diverse materials including wood, aluminium, plastic, steel, ceramic, glass, rubber, resin, polycarbonate, leather and cloth: exploiting their potential to create complex and challenging forms. It is a radical vocabulary that encompasses the organic, amorphous, geometric, rectilinear, intimate and monumental. Along with his continued interest in material exploration, *Association* illustrates Deacon's fascination with the relationship of the individual component to the structural whole and new works in ceramic, aluminium and steel evidence this investigation.

Installed in the gallery's courtyard, *Congregate* (2011) is a large stainless steel sculpture comprising eight unique, skeletal, polygonal frames that interlock to create a single, complex unit. Drawing inspiration from collective organisations, Deacon has brought together individual elements to construct an intricate and challenging entirety: a sculptural congregation. Although whole, the sculpture emits a restless and pulsating dynamism, echoed in the highly worked steel surface. A myriad of shapes and angles invite multiple perspectives and act as a reminder of its individual parts. *Congregate* cannot be perceived in a singular moment and, rather, the spectator is forced to move around it, navigating its form.

Republic is a collective title for a series of small rectilinear ceramic works constructed from irregular prism-like shapes. Like bundles of firewood or piles of pick-up-sticks, these independent ceramic elements, placed on rubber and wooden plinths, feel only momentarily united: as if they might be broken apart and reconstructed at any moment. Ultimately bound by their sculptural whole however, each unit is brought together for a concrete and significant purpose - a societal analogy echoed in and reinforced by their title.

Deacon's uncompromising and daring material exploration is exemplified with the monumental, glazed ceramic sculpture, *Fold* (2012). Comprised of 60 elements, this pleated clay wall, like of an oversized paravent or complicated game of Exquisite Corpse, is inherently contradictory. Like the word play and ambiguity implicit in the title, the work is simultaneously impenetrable and yet protective; at once foreboding and inviting.

A series of three stainless steel or aluminium wall-mounted *Alphabet* sculptures (E, F and G) explore the idea of the alphabet as a democratic form of organisation and the nature of signifiers as the basis of communication. Derived from a group of 26 drawings, (hence an Alphabet), the works are abstract and constructed: their forms simultaneously suggestive of meaning yet resistant to actual interpretation.

As with each individual work, where single units combine to complete the form, the exhibition is comprised of unique components conceived as whole: each sculpture essential to the totality of meaning, an association of forms and ideas.

Notes to Editors

About the artist

Richard Deacon (b.1949) lives and works in London. Solo exhibitions include Musee d'art Moderne et Contemporain, Strasbourg (2010); Madison Square Park, New York (2008); Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, (2007); Tate St Ives (2005), and Centre Pompidou, Paris (2003). Group exhibitions include San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) (2010); Tate Modern (2004) and Henry Moore Institute (2003). Deacon's work is included in public collections including Tate Gallery, London; Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. Deacon has been awarded CBE by the Order of the British Empire and also a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Artes et Lettres by the Ministry of Culture, France. He was awarded the Turner Prize in 1987 and represented Wales in the 52nd Venice Biennale of Art in 2007

Exhibition Facts

Opening Hours: Monday-Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 11am-5pm

Location: 29 Bell Street Back Space, London, NW1 5BY

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