

galeria

nara roesler

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galeria nara roesler | new york león ferrari | for a world with no hell

opening:

tuesday
april 26, 2018
6pm-8pm

exhibition:

april 27- june 16, 2018
mon-sat >10am-6pm

22 east 69th street 3r
new york ny 10021 usa

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Galeria Nara Roesler | New York is pleased to present León Ferrari, For a World with No Hell, featuring 22 collages that delve into love, language, religion, and power-recurrent themes in the

artist's oeuvre. The exhibition follows the announcement of the gallery's representation of the artist's estate earlier this year.

Curated by Lisette Lagnado, curator of the 26th Bienal de São Paulo (2006), *For a World with No Hell* is the second of two exhibitions of Ferrari's work organized by Galeria Nara Roesler in 2018, with the first on view in São Paulo through May. Specially conceived for the gallery's intimate setting, the exhibition in New York will be open to the public from April 27 to June 16 2018.

"The current selection sought to highlight one of the fundamental elements in an artistic life that spanned nearly 60 years: the erotic pleasure," says Lagnado. "The show is structured around the collage *La Venus tocada* [The Touched Venus], in which a naked and armless sculpture is caressed by 11 human hands. The odd number suggests the intrusion of the artist's hand into the picture, while the depiction of the back-facing figure adds a valuable androgynous component to the definition of beauty."

The other collages included in the exhibition were produced between 1986 and 1988, and between 1996 and 1998. While these are thematically concerned with love, the curator notes, "his conception, far from platonic, challenges discrimination against homosexuality and the misogyny of the holy scriptures, which are punctuated by punishments and hells." The artist questions the contradiction between the use of sexual and violent imagery in religious iconography, and the censure of sexual imagery in relation to pleasure. Throughout his career, Ferrari produced pieces that challenged commandments, as well as political and scientific doctrines. Therefore, the relationship between Art and Power defines Ferrari's body of work, which vehemently denounces violence.

In curating the exhibition, Lagnado selected artworks that employ oriental iconography and braille as a means to expand the visual repertoire beyond a Greco-Roman aesthetic and embrace a sensorial energy. The importance of braille is tied to the investigation of language, which is central to Ferrari's practice. As Lagnado explains, "The fusion of mysticism and blindness applies to the text and images simultaneously, taking into consideration that text is image." In some of his most notorious series, the artist questions excerpts of canonical texts by creating enmeshed lines, a process that entails distorting calligraphies so that they become unreadable, inspiring imaginary codes and creating an inaccessible language. In 2009, the Museum of Modern Art presented *Tangled Alphabets: León Ferrari and Mira Schendel*, curated by Luis Pérez-Oramas, which focused on these artists' investigations of the written language in visual art. Now, nearly a decade later, Galeria Nara Roesler presents an exhibition that asks, as Lagnado writes, "For whom are these alphabets? And what do they have to say about the images with which they are associated?"

León Ferrari (Buenos Aires, 1920–2013) is one of the most celebrated Latin American artists in the world. He was widely acclaimed in 2007 in La Biennale di Venezia, where he received the Golden Lion in recognition of a body of work that, until the end of his life, motivated him to challenge the world in which we live. In his artistic practice, he used such diverse languages as sculpture, drawing, writing, collage, assemblage, installation, and video, integrating themes that reveal his character as a researcher and activist: the aesthetic investigation of language; the questioning of the Western world, power, and the rules that dictate the values of religion, art, justice, and the state; the reverence for women and eroticism; and the depiction of violence. His

poetics, recognized since his early works, also draws on repetition, irony, and literality. His work was included in major international exhibitions such as, The Words of Others: León Ferrari and Rhetoric in Times of War, Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM), USA, 2018, and Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater, Los Angeles, USA, 2017–2018; La Donación Ferrari (The Ferrari Donation), Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2014; León Ferrari: Brailles y Relecturas de la Biblia, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA), Argentina, 2012; Tangled Alphabets: León Ferrari and Mira Schendel, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA, 2009; Retrospectiva León Ferrari, Pinacoteca do Estado do São Paulo, Brazil, 2006; and Politiscripts, The Drawing Center, New York, USA, 2004. He participated in Think with the Senses, Feel with the Mind: Art in the Present Tense at the 2007 Venice Biennale, where he received the Golden Lion. Ferrari's work is included in important institutional collections, such as Perez Art Museum, USA; the Art Institute of Chicago, USA; the Wifredo Lam Center, Havana, Cuba; the Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich, Switzerland; Fondo Nacional de las Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina; MALBA, Argentina; Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, Brazil; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA; MoMA, USA; and Tate Modern, London, UK.

Image
Leon Ferrari
The Touched Venus
box with collage
21 x 14 x 1.9 inches

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