

GEORG BASELITZ

Devotion

12th of September to the 9th of November

Opening: 12th of September from 5pm to 10 pm.

At this fourth exhibition by Georg Baselitz, the Pilar Serra Gallery is presenting his most recent edition of prints, *Devotion*, from 2018, based on self-portraits of artists that Baselitz admires and that he has reinterpreted in his peculiar and inimitable style.

Hans Georg Kern, (his real name), took his artistic surname from his hometown of Deutchbaselitz, where he was born in 1938 and today he is considered to be one of the best known and significant artists – painter, engraver, sculptor- of the 20th and 21st centuries.

For Baselitz, printing is a part of his work that is as important as painting or sculpture. He made his first print in 1964 and he has established a yearly rhythm of work in which he devotes himself to a new graphic work project from October to December. He works directly on the sheet and uses his own printing press, making many trials until he is finally satisfied. At times, when the editions are short, he makes the prints himself by hand, helped by his wife, using a very traditional method.

His engravings explore the same thematic fields as his paintings or his sculptures; in the artist's own words: "what I do in painting moves over to what I do in printing", although he finishes them independently. He has found a very personal language; from 1977 onwards he carried out a series of monumental prints and around 1981 the figures and backgrounds became integrated and the immersion of the figure accents the reversal effect showing great interest in the colour which, according to him "is not used to underscore the nature of the object, the figurativeness, but rather it forms a completely independent value".

His love of graphic artwork extends to the field of knowledge. Over the years he has become an avid collector of prints from the 16th century, which at times he has exhibited; all of this passion is obviously reflected in his own work.

This time we are presenting his most recent series of prints, called *Devotion*, a series made up of 32 sugar-lift aquatints, of which we are going to exhibit 18, based on self-portraits of painters that Baselitz admires. Many artists paint their self-portraits. Baselitz himself has painted many portraits. He has painted himself and his wife; at times dressed as other characters: his parents, Lenin, Stalin... Obsessed by Rousseau, Baselitz ended up painting himself and his wife, naked, with the faces of Henry and Clémence Rousseau.

Contemporary artists ranging from Nicole Eisenman, Tracey Emin or Cecily Brown to German expressionists such as Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Erich Heckel, along with Rothko, Rauschenberg, Lucio Fontana, Schönberg, Otto Dix and Rousseau and Mme. Rousseau, amongst others, may be found in Baselitz's selection. Each self-portrait has been carefully selected and reinterpreted in Baselitz's highly personal style. *Devotion* forms part of a broader project that includes a series of paintings and drawings, on the same subject, which have been exhibited in the Gagolian Gallery in London.

In addition to the prints from the *Devotion* series, the exhibition shows a series of portraits of Elke, Baselitz's wife (2017) and a large scale linocut *Balthus' model* (2002) with a very short edition of 6 copies, of which 3 are on a black background and one of which is on show in the gallery; another 2 are black with a reserve in white and 1 in red.

This year Baselitz has had an important exhibition at Venice's Gallerie dell'Accademia. This is the first time a living artist has exhibited there, which gives an idea of the position that he holds on the international art scene.