

BEN BROWN

- Press Release for immediate release -

23 January – 7 April 2006

Private View 6 February 2006 6 – 9 pm

Ben Brown Fine Arts is pleased to announce an exhibition by Alighiero Boetti: *Un Pozzo Senza Fine*. On display is a wide range of embroideries which form a fascinating and important segment in his oeuvre. The embroideries were first fabricated in Afghanistan and then after the Russian invasion in 1979, the production was moved to Pakistan. Boetti designed his pieces in Italy with the help of his assistants and then travelled to Afghanistan and later to Pakistan at least twice a year with his drafts.

Alighiero Boetti was born in Turin in 1940. His first works which were created in the 1960s were more object oriented and fitted well within the realms of Arte Povera. However, his work became progressively more similar to that of conceptual artists such as On Kawara (time) and Lawrence Wiener (language). Boetti concentrated more on the creative conception of the work and left its execution to others – in case of the embroideries to Afghani women. This would also enable Boetti to integrate Eastern culture and its tradition in his works (often represented by Farsi writing) since he was very much interested in the principle of polar forces and harmonies and hence, bridging West and East. Boetti died in Rome in 1994.

The *Mappa*, amongst his most important works within the embroideries, were first executed in 1971. The embroidered maps of the world usually have a monochrome background from which the coloured continents and countries appear. At the time of the design of the *Mappa* Boetti chronicled the then current geo-political situation of the world. However, because of the lengthy process of embroidering a *Mappa* (up to two years), each individual work would gain a character of transitoriness because the world had changed since its original design and hence the *Mappa* would lose pictorial value as a true representation of the current state of the world. This concept also ties in with Boetti's concept of order/disorder. The country borders would change frequently so that new *Mappe* needed to be designed in order to represent the transformed situation – there was perpetual change.

Tutto is another group of works exhibited in the show. The meaning of *Tutto* is "the entirety of the world". These works attempt to capture the diversity of things in the world, beyond human comprehension. There tends to be a specific underlying colour tone showing no disharmony amongst the colours used offering the viewer a wealth of things, motifs and objects from the entire visible and conceivable world. The pictures appear to be cropped from a much larger spectrum of things. The *Tutto* works arouse a visual reminder of a puzzle but actually they are not made from a divisible unity rather they describe the path to construction or reconstructing totality.

A group of Kilims cover the gallery floor. They were his last project and were shown in Grenoble as well as in Los Angeles in 1994. They were designed by Fine Arts students in France and continue his thoughts on order/disorder through using varying representations of 100 squares. Finally, the *Arazzi* are amongst the most important works he executed as they contain phrases which appear time and time again.

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