

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS



Vik Muniz, *Trap (Handmade)*, 2019, mixed media, unique, 106.7 x 143 cm; (42 x 56 1/4 in.)

VIK MUNIZ REAL PICTURES

7 JUNE – 19 SEPTEMBER 2019
PRIVATE VIEW: THURSDAY, 6 JUNE, 6-8PM

Ben Brown Fine Arts is thrilled to announce its second solo exhibition at the London gallery of internationally-acclaimed artist Vik Muniz. *Real Pictures* – which debuts Muniz's most recent *Handmade* series for the first time in the United Kingdom – explores the nature of perception, reality and representation and challenges notions of materiality. Unlike Muniz's previous series which refer to specific images from art history, collective memory and popular culture, this new body of work refers to the fundamental elements of abstract art itself: colour, composition, form and rhythm, and draws upon connections to abstract art movements including op art, conceptual art and constructivism.

Muniz is renowned for his ingenious employment of a wide range of materials, including dust, sugar, chocolate, diamonds, caviar, toys, paper hole-punches, junk, dry pigment and magazine shreds, each used to reconstruct images which tap into the viewer's subconscious visual repository and incite further investigation. Muniz's *Handmade* works are exceptionally rich in allusion, forcing viewers to refocus their attention on the materials themselves and compelling them to consider the process of their creation.

As their title suggests, these unique works are the result of a hybrid technique which fuses handcrafted, three-dimensional elements – most notably painting and collaged components – with high-resolution digital photography. These abstract, material studies compel the viewer to closely investigate the dichotomy between the physical object and its depiction while simultaneously reinventing the possibilities of the

construction of the photographic image. Commenting on the complicated image-object relationship highlighted within these works, Muniz observes, "It always goes both ways. What you expect to be a photo isn't, and what you expect to be an object is a photographic image." Expanding on this idea, Muniz notes, "In an age when everything is reproducible, the difference between the work and the image of the work almost does not exist."

The results of his investigation and experimentation are complex compositions, each individual work combining different techniques: paper and card are painted, cut out and arranged on a surface, photographed, rearranged and then re-photographed, thus creating layers of multifaceted volume, shadows and pictorial planes. The simple geometrical forms and primary colours of works such as *Messy Colour Grid*, *Trap* and *Maru* (all 2019) create a tension and a sense of dynamic movement. As Muniz notes, "sometimes we want to know how things are made. Sometimes we don't." By creating different layers which reveal underlying elements and their photographs, Muniz creates a unique *trompe-l'œil* effect, where the objects and their photographic counterparts are interlinked in a visual illusion.

The artist will be present at the opening.

VIK MUNIZ

Vik Muniz was born in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1961 and currently lives and works in both New York and Rio de Janeiro. His work has been exhibited in prestigious institutions worldwide. These include the International Center of Photography, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Menil Collection, Houston; Museu de Arte Moderna São Paulo; Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro; Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona; Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rome; Irish Museum of Contemporary Art, Dublin; Tel Aviv Museum, Israel; and Long Museum, Shanghai. His work also features in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Art Institute of Chicago; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo; Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and Tate, London.

In 2001 Muniz represented the Brazilian Pavilion at the 49th Venice Biennale. Vik Muniz is the subject of an Academy Award-nominated documentary film entitled *Waste Land* (2010) and serves as a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador.

FOR FURTHER PRESS INFORMATION AND ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:

Emilie Ortolan
Ben Brown Fine Arts
T. +44 (0)20 7734 8888
E. emilie@benbrownfinearts.com
www.benbrownfinearts.com

Please join the conversation with Ben Brown Fine Arts on Twitter (@BenBrownFineArt), Facebook (@BenBrownFineArts) and Instagram (@benbrownfinearts), via the hashtags #RealPictures and #VikMuniz