

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS

For Immediate Release

VIK MUNIZ: Pictures of Magazines 2

Private view 20 November 2012, 6-9pm

21 November 2012 – 8 February 2013

Ben Brown Fine Arts, Hong Kong, is pleased to present the first solo exhibition in Asia of works by the internationally celebrated Brazilian photographer Vik Muniz. This exhibition will feature photographs from his recent *Pictures of Magazines 2* series, in which the artist has carefully culled and torn pieces of paper from art, fashion and news magazines; amalgamated them into re-creations of iconic and historically significant paintings; and then photographed and magnified the images, resulting in evocative, exquisitely-detailed and entirely unique works of art. Muniz is renowned for his ingenious and laborious employment of unusual materials - dust, sugar, chocolate, diamonds, caviar, toys, paper hole-punches, junk, dry pigment - to reconstruct images, often art historically related, that tap into the spectator's subconscious visual repository and beg for further investigation. Muniz's elaborate material creations - in this case the magazine collages - are ephemeral; it is his masterly photographic documentation that is the final work of art, which is intentionally many steps removed from the original image that inspired it.

The exhibition features strikingly bold large-scale colour photographs based on visually resonant paintings by artists such as Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, Paul Cézanne, Edward Hopper, Edouard Manet and George Stubbs. Muniz simulates the brushstrokes of these paintings with scraps of magazine paper carefully selected not only for their corresponding colour values but also their imagery - faces, body parts, text, advertisements - that collaged together suggest a tactile, impastoed surface. It is not just the final appropriated image that invites perusal, it is the minute components of the image - the bits of paper - that provide the irony, double meanings and visual associations for which Muniz is so well known. Highlights of the exhibition include optically rich renditions of Manet's *Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, Annibale Carracci's *The Butcher Shop*, Hopper's *Summer in the City* and Mary Cassatt's *Picking Flowers in a Field*.

About Vik Muniz

Vik Muniz was born in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1961 and currently lives in both New York City and Rio de Janeiro. He has had exhibitions at such prestigious institutions as the International Center of Photography, New York; Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo; Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona; the Menil Collection, Houston; Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rome and the Irish Museum of Contemporary Art, Dublin. His work is also included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Tate Gallery, London; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. 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), which chronicles the artist's collaborations with a group of *catadores* - trash-pickers - in Jardim Gramacho, Brazil, the world's largest garbage dump, located on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. Muniz spent three years working with these marginalized individuals using the collected recyclable trash to create monumental portraits of them, referencing Old Master paintings, that reveal both their dignity and desperation. Muniz was recently named a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for his contributions in education and social development, in particular for his work with the *catadores*.

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