

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alex Katz, *Study for the Light*, 1973, oil on aluminum, 21 ½ x 21 ½ x 2 ½ in.



Raymond Hains, *Seita, Saffa. (Allumettes de Fumes)*
1970, painted wood construction, 44 x 28 x 13 in

Pop Réal

March 4 - April 16, 2016

Opening Reception: Friday, March 4, 2016 5:30 - 7:30 PM

Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-6pm

Locks Gallery is pleased to present Pop Réal, a group exhibition that examines the intersection of two influential art movements of the twentieth century: Pop Art in America and Nouveau Réalisme in Europe. Both movements, arising from the turbulent socio-political climate of the mid-20th century, articulate the role of representation in popular culture and fine arts. The vibrant exhibition features work by more than twenty internationally acclaimed artists from both continents to represent a clash of culture, consumption, and political protest.

At first glance, the word “Pop” evokes lighthearted icons of popular culture—as in Warhol’s silkscreened Brillo Boxes and Marilyn paintings, or the soft object sculptures of Claes Oldenburg. However, on closer examination, the work of “pop art” underscores a pathos of consumerism and advertising repeated through the appropriation of everyday objects, images and modes of production. In his seminal 1968 lecture at MoMA, art critic and historian Leo Steinberg stated, “When Roy Lichtenstein in the early sixties painted an Air Force officer kissing his girl goodbye, the actual subject matter was the mass-produced, comic-book image; ben-day dots and stereotyped drawing ensured that the image was understood as a representation of printed matter.”

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Concurrently in Europe, in a 1960 manifesto penned by art critic Pierre Restany and artist Yves Klein, the Nouveau Réalisme artists proclaimed a new return to realism, through a movement aimed at describing an ordinary, everyday reality without idealization. In an attempt to avoid the mythological trappings of post-war abstraction and the academic art history of figuration, these artists made extensive use of collage and assemblage, incorporating found imagery, photographs and mundane objects into the material and subject of their work. Restany described the methods as a “poetic recycling of urban, industrial, and advertising reality.”

The exhibition considers works in a variety of media, forms, and content, including examples by famed Nouveau Réalisme artists Arman and Raymond Hains, alongside American counterparts Robert Rauschenberg and Richard Artschwager; as well as a younger generation of contemporary artists who came of age in the wake of Pop Art. As Roy Lichtenstein famously stated, “The things that I have parodied I actually admire.” This admiration of the everyday, through realism or kitsch, can be seen throughout the exhibition whether via Polly Apfelbaum’s polychromatic floral polaroids, Ray Johnson’s intimate collages, or Lichtenstein’s famed imagery of love and war.

Other artists featured in Pop Réal include Alex Katz, Jasper Johns, Claes Oldenberg, Thomas Chimes, Robert Morris, George Segal, Noel Mahaffey, and Donald Baechler. A 64-page illustrated catalog is available at the gallery.

Locks Gallery is located at 600 Washington Square South in Philadelphia, PA. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am to 6 pm. For additional information, please contact Locks Gallery at 215-629-1000, fax 215-629-3868, or email info@locksgallery.com

