

TANYA LEIGHTON

PRESS RELEASE

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DEREK BOSHIER

CHANGE

8 March – 12 April 2014

Preview: Friday, 7 March 6–9pm

With an illustrated talk by the artist at 7pm

The exhibition continues at Kurfürstenstraße 13/14.

Tanya Leighton Gallery is proud to present a solo exhibition by the celebrated British Pop artist Derek Boshier, his first in Berlin. Boshier, whose career spans over 50 years, has been lauded as one of the founding contributors of Pop. Featured in Ken Russell's historic documentary 'Pop Goes The Easel' (1962) along with Peter Blake, Pauline Boty, and Peter Philips, Boshier's unique sensibility and rigorous mining of popular culture has contributed an immense amount to the movement of Pop Art – a movement which continues to aptly spotlight some of the more disconcerting aspects of contemporary culture.

Featuring a survey of works selected from throughout the artist's career, Boshier's exhibition revolves largely around two under-appreciated films from the early '70s, 'Link' (1970) and 'Reel' (1973). Masterpieces of montage, both of these films exemplify Boshier's interest in depicting and deriding popular culture. Originally addressed in his paintings and collages from the early '60s, which became known as the first exemplars of British Pop Art, Boshier's approach to advertising and popular culture melds with the conventions of film.

'Link' possesses a striking contemporaneity while managing to examine and toy with Modernist and Post-Modernist history. This fourteen-minute montage passes through myriad manifestations of the three primary forms – the square, triangle, and the circle – famously mused over by Vasily Kandinsky and his pedagogical cohorts at the Bauhaus. Drawing from a variety of sources, including everything from mosques, to the female anatomy, to comic books, Boshier's primary forms are not sacred like Kandinsky's, but libidinal, charged, and indicative of the visual clutter familiar to everyday living. Images appear and fade into one another according to a logic strictly governed by formal criteria, yet the piece is brimming with Pop narrative.

'Reel' pits the documentarian and the fictional against each other to tease out filmic convention and undermine viewers' expectations. A pair of silver, platform heels is the thread that walks through a seemingly well-mannered romp through English culture. As the shoes find themselves in new locations, resting for a moment at the polo grounds, onward to commotion on the street, the viewer becomes aware of a biting critique of English colonialism, fetishism, and the social hierarchy that inspires it.

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Still images culled from advertising and other sources alternate with time-based footage, intertwining a witty humor with pointed cultural criticism.

In dialogue with the historical works being presented in the upper gallery, two of the artist's latest films, 'Best Foot Forward' and 'Did You See... That?' are screening in the downstairs gallery space. Both works (2014) – debuting here – expand on the filmic techniques that Boshier has used since his early films – montage, still image, and varied means of appropriation. The two films are accompanied by a selection of artworks and ephemera dating from the late 1950s to today.

'Link', 'Reel', 'Best Foot Forward', and 'Did You See That?' all display a keen and nuanced sense of the cinematic as a space delineated by convention but open to experimentation, exploring and expanding the form's possibilities. As such, they testify to the need to re-evaluate the pioneering British Pop artist's practice, not just as a painter and draughtsman, but as filmmaker as well.

Alongside the films, at the gallery's second location (Kurfürstenstraße 13/14), Boshier will show 'Change' (1973) a monumental series of collages that measures 34 meters in total. A winding embodiment of celluloid, 'Change' slows the experience of viewing a film from 24 frames per second to a pace dictated solely by the artwork's viewer. Much like 'Link' and 'Reel', 'Change' employs an idiosyncratic logic that is part formal and part sociopolitical. Images gradually transform into others through a vaguely biological process of measured change. A subjective form of animation – the speed with which Boshier's ideas and images morph is left to his audience. The immense installation was originally shown at the Whitechapel Gallery, London in 1973, and has not been publicly displayed since. 'Change' is shown alongside a stop motion film of the same name, also dating from 1973.

Derek Boshier (b. 1937, Portsmouth; based in LA) is a British painter, sculptor, photographer, printmaker, and filmmaker. Boshier graduated from the Royal College of Art, London in 1962, where along with David Hockney, Allen Jones, and Peter Phillips, he was one of the students associated with Pop Art. In 1962, he appeared in Ken Russell's 'Pop Goes the Easel' with Peter Blake, Pauline Boty, and Peter Phillips. Notable solo exhibitions include: Robert Fraser Gallery, London; Galerie Bichofsberger, Zurich; 'Derek Boshier Documentation and Work', which toured institutions in Great Britain in 1972; Hayward Gallery, London; Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; the Institute of Contemporary Art, London; Marconi Gallery, Milan; Palace of Culture, Warsaw; Museum of Contemporary Arts, Lodz, Poland; Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, Texas; and most recently at the National Portrait Gallery, London in 2014. His work is held in notable collections worldwide, including The Collection of Her Majesty The Queen, Windsor Castle, England; The Tate Gallery of British Art, London; The Victoria and Albert Museum, London; National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh; New Orleans Museum of Art, Louisiana; The Dallas Museum of Art, Texas; The Menil Collection, Houston, Texas; Yale Centre of British Art, Connecticut; and The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Boshier is a visiting lecturer at UCLA School of Arts where he teaches drawing.

For further details contact info@tanyaleighton.com or telephone +49 (0)30221607770. The gallery is open Tuesday – Saturday, 11-6pm and by appointment.