

Gli amori difficili

JENNIFER BARTLETT ALIGHIERO BOETTI PAUL BRANCA
OLIVER LUTZ MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO JONATHAN VANDYKE

Opening: Thursday, July 12, 6 - 8pm
Exhibition Dates: July 12 - August 10, 2012

Scaramouche is pleased to present the exhibition, *Gli amori difficili*, inspired by the collection of tales by author Italo Calvino. Impressed by banal oppositions of daily life, Calvino penned several amorous stories that make up *Gli amori difficili (Difficult Loves)* in Italy of the 1950's and 60's. Calvino's storytelling is simultaneously simple and complex. *Gli amori difficili* (1970) presents the reader with 15 novellas, each sharing the theme of love's often inescapable condition of being misunderstood by its protagonists, and how communication is pertinent yet rare. Calvino gives us a gift of written beauty in his descriptions of life's everyday, yet amorous, situations tinged with playfulness and charm. Scaramouche's summer show, *Gli amori difficili*, proposes 6 artists who deal with various interpretations of love's wide range of emotions, its conditions and patterns, its faults and problems. Calvino's collection of short stories sets the stage for individual interpretations of some of love's more difficult qualities.

Alighiero Boetti's *Arazzi* (wall hangings or tapestries) propose ideas of labor, translation, truisms, and wordplays, reflecting opposing factors such as the individual and society, error and perfection, order and disorder. Consisting of colored letters embroidered in grids, upon closer inspection, they reveal phrases in Italian that comment on the high probability of misunderstandings inherent in the nature of communication itself.

Michelangelo Pistoletto's two iconic *Specchi* (mirrors) contain banal elements that situate the viewer within the frame of the works and alongside the printed object. This visual relationship between the viewer and the object can be seen as an imitation of the tension found in a brand new amorous relationship. His still life *La Rosa* (1981) portrays a lonely rose atop a table whose negative space is a reflection of life outside the work.

Jennifer Bartlett's *Fire/Fallen Table* (1988-89) asserts the viewer by pronouncing the artist's need to present both a painted work and a physical object. The difficulty of doing two things at once, creating both a sculpture and a painting dependent upon spatial discrepancies, a work being both destroyed and salvaged, perhaps symbolic of a couple, spending their lives together and apart.

Paul Branca's works incorporate a deliberate use of the dismantled language of painting as a starting point. His work *Untitled (Indigo)*, (2012), addresses both the conditions of a traditional studio practice and 'real life' outside. Branca plays with the comma, as Boetti often does, as a pause, a break, between the duty of the painter and life outside of the work.

Oliver Lutz's painting installation, *Untitled (Punishment by crucifixion and spearing)*, (2012) raises questions about our relationship with - and attraction toward - images both as image-makers and as viewers. The image is beneath layers of a painted monochrome canvas and is revealed to the viewer through an infrared surveillance camera trained on the work and monitors set close by. Similar to Pistoletto's mirrors, here by way of the monitor, the viewer observes him/herself standing in front of the canvas, effectively becoming part of the work.

Jonathan VanDyke's *Mike Piazza at Home* reproduces an *Architectural Digest* feature on baseball player Piazza, who infamously held a 2002 press conference to announce that he was not gay. Piazza and his wife are shown smiling in their newly furnished Miami apartment while the center of the article is pierced by a tube that drips paint slowly covering up the photograph with layers of striped paint, interrupting the couple's staged bliss.