

BERTRAND LAVIER MEDLEY

WORKS FROM THE COLLECTION

2018.04.19 _____ 2018.09.24

The Espace Louis Vuitton Tokyo is pleased to present *Medley*, a monographic exhibition dedicated to French artist Bertrand Lavier. This exhibition has been produced in the framework of the Fondation Louis Vuitton's "Hors-les-murs" program, showcasing previously unseen holdings of the Collection at the Espaces Culturels Louis Vuitton in Tokyo, Munich, Venice and Beijing, thus carrying out the Fondation's intent to realize international projects and make them accessible to a broader public.

Bertrand Lavier is an artist whose oeuvre has subverted the traditional categories of artistic classification. After studying horticulture at the Ecole Nationale d'Horticulture in Versailles (France), a subject that has since influenced his outlook, Lavier began his artistic career in the early 1970s. Reflecting upon the relationship between painting and sculpture, representation and abstraction, life and art, Lavier's approach blends the spirit of Marcel Duchamp's readymades with the mass-culture imagery of pop art and the trivial items typical of New Realism.

Lavier transcends traditional categories of painting and sculpture in order to emphasise hybridisation. His works, which take the form of objects that are painted, layered, mounted on a plinth, enlarged or simply removed from their original context, are organised into chantiers or "building sites", as he calls his series, which he deliberately leaves open-ended to allow for the possibility of returning to them. Lavier incorporates everyday objects as well as other art into his work. In the 1980s, Lavier began using his "Van Gogh" painting technique as a form of intervention, covering everyday objects with a thick impressionist-like layer of paint. With this act of painting over an existing object, banal items become artworks, but, even more importantly, the object becomes a painted image of itself. Paradoxically, the representation of reality only occurs when the original object is hidden from view and completely disappears. The result is an ambiguous vision of painting, its abstract nature replaced by an equivocal status hovering between figuration and abstraction.

The Espace Louis Vuitton Tokyo invites to an exploration of the various styles and categories typical of Lavier's oeuvre through the display of seven works from the Collection. From the painterly "Van Gogh" technique of *Atomium* (2007), to the playful tongue-in-cheek readymade interpretation of *La Bocca sur Zanker* (2005), this exhibition demonstrates Lavier's unique ability to continuously develop and experiment with strategies of translation, transposition, and conversion. The exhibition also displays the neon installation *Empress of India II* (2005), acrylic works *Walt Disney Productions 1947-2013 N°2* (2013), *Birka* (2007) and *Paysages Aixoïis* (2014), and the chrome-plated sculpture *Ibo* (2008). The blending of genres, principles and materials, is emblematic of Lavier's artistic practice, producing works that destabilise our perception and disrupt our familiar ways of interpreting art, creating a visual impact that is paradoxically and strikingly self-evident.

About the artist

Bertrand Lavier was born in Châtillon-sur-Seine, France, in 1949. As a seminal figure in the movement toward appropriation art in the 1980s and 1990s, Lavier is perhaps best known for his readymades, created by covering everyday industrial objects such as refrigerators and tables with an impasto layer of paint, or placing ubiquitous objects on a pedestal. With a broad depth of media that encompasses his oeuvre, Lavier's works have been widely exhibited throughout the world including a major retrospective of his work at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France, in 2012. Other recent exhibitions include: *Walt Disney Productions*, Kunstmuseum Luzern, Switzerland, (2017); *Bertrand Lavier*, Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Monaco, Monaco, (2016); *Une rétrospective*, Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Liechtenstein, (2016); *L'affaire tournesols*, Fondation Vincent Van Gogh, Arles, France, (2014-2015). His work appears in the public collections of the National Gallery of Victoria, Australia; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, USA; and The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan, amongst many others. Lavier currently lives and works between Paris and Aignay-le-Duc, France.

About the Fondation Louis Vuitton

The Fondation Louis Vuitton serves the public interest and is exclusively dedicated to contemporary art and artists, as well as 20th century works to which their inspirations can be traced. The Collection and the exhibitions it organizes seek to engage a broad public. The building created by architect Frank Gehry, and already recognized as an emblematic example of 21st century architecture, constitutes the Fondation's seminal artistic statement. Since its opening in October 2014, the Fondation has welcomed more than a million visitors from France and around the world per year.

Confirming the international recognition of its artistic commitment, the exhibition *Icons of Modern Art, The Shchukin Collection* received a record-breaking 1.2 million visitors in six months (Oct. 2016-Mar. 2017).

The Fondation Louis Vuitton commits to engage into international initiatives, both at the Fondation and in partnership with public and private institutions, including other foundations and museums. It is also responsible for the artistic direction of a specific "Hors-les-murs" program within its cultural spaces in Munich, Beijing, Tokyo and Venice, which are exclusively devoted to exhibitions of works from its collection. The exhibitions they organize are open to the public free of charge, and their programs are promoted through specific cultural communication.

Espace Louis Vuitton Tokyo

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Hours: 12:00-20:00

Open on national holidays except January 1st and Omotesando store holidays.

Free admission

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