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ERIC SHINER CURATES LARGE-SCALE INSTALLATIONS AND SITE-SPECIFIC COMMISSIONS FOR THE ARMORY SHOW

The Armory Show returns to Pier 92 & 94 this week, open to the public from March 2-5. With 210 exhibitors, the fair will debut a new series entitled “Platform,” a staging of large-scale works, installations, and site-specific commissions curated by **Eric Shiner**, the Senior Vice President of Contemporary Art at **Sotheby’s**.

Whitewall spoke Shiner about curating the Platform exhibition “An Incident” for The Armory Show, which includes art from **Abel Barroso, Patricia Cronin, Douglas Coupland, Abigail DeVille, Sebastian Errazuriz, Dorian Gaudin, Jun Kaneko, Per Kirkeby, Yayoi Kusama, Iván Navarro, Evan Roth, Fiete Stolte, Lawrence Weiner** and **Ai Weiwei**.

WHITEWALL How do you hope “An Incident” will bring new energy to the fair model, as compared to other fairs with longstanding annual specially commissioned projects?

ERIC SHINER: My goal for “An Incident” is to break up the monotony of fair navigation itself. Many other fairs have long-standing and museum-quality exhibitions in dedicated spaces, grouped together with a unique curatorial vision. I wanted to insert works of art and installations throughout the fair, penetrating the system and providing moments of surprise to The Armory Show visitors. I hope this methodology creates moments of respite, shock and awe while reminding everyone why we are all there: for the art itself.

WW: Which works were specifically made for this year’s edition of The Armory Show, like **Ivan Navarro’s *Chant***?

ES: We commissioned Yayoi Kusama, Abigail DeVille, Ivan Navarro and Sebastian Errazuriz to make new works for the show. Many others are reinterpretations of historic works, namely the Per Kirkeby/Lawrence Weiner hybrid work and Patricia Cronin's *Tack Room*.

WW: "An Incident" offers a chance to see Patricia Cronin's 1997 installation *Tack Room*. How do you think that work will feel, re-staged after 20 years?

ES: I am beyond thrilled that we are able to present this seminal work to our visitors. I have full faith that the work will feel incredibly current, relevant and fresh. It is a monument to women and their labor, just as it stands in the face of misogyny and the concept of the trophy (wife). Patricia Cronin is one of the most important artists of our day, and I am honored to have the opportunity to bring this work back to NYC at this very particular moment in time.

WW: Given the political climate in the U.S. and in New York, do you see Cuban artist Abel Barroso's *Emigrant's Pinball* taking on a new layer of meaning at the fair?

ES: 100%. Not only is it more timely than ever in its stance on immigration issues, but I can safely say that many of us will likely empathize with the pinballs as they are being shot through space, bouncing off of walls and barriers, unable to make sense of their immediate environs.

WW: Can you tell us more about what to expect from Dorian Gaudin's self-roving *Missing You*?

ES: Of all of the work in the exhibition, I think that *Missing You* is the perfect metaphor for America in 2017. The question becomes whether America is the machine or that which lies in its path.

WW: What role do you see a curated exhibition like Platform playing in a commercial fair setting?

ES: I think that it's great to mix things up, bring new voices and artists into the mix, and make people realize that all of us in the art world, regardless of our workplace or title, all do what we do in the service of artists and their legacies. We are a completely unusual organism that requires nourishment from all avenues, whether they be academic, museum-based, commercial or practice-based, in order to survive.

WW: In 2013, you curated the Focus section of the Armory Show. Having now also curated this new series, what would you say is the most challenging aspect of breaking through and changing visitors' relationship to a fair?

ES: That's easy: making people feel present, engaged, energized and excited...and for the entire time they are there. I hope that my various incidents keep people on their toes, happy and fully engaged as they navigate the wonderful exhibitors' booths.

Katy Donoghue February 28, 2017

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