



## PRESS RELEASE

Vittorio Santoro

### **Travaux sur papier, 2008-2019**

Exhibition

Yvon Lambert Bookshop, Paris ; 15 March - 13 April 2019

The exhibition *Travaux sur papier, 2008-2019* brings together a range of recent works by Vittorio Santoro. The focus lies on the on-going series called "Time-based text works" and is expanded with photographic works, collages, real-time activities on paper and object-like drawings.

The time-based text works by Vittorio Santoro belong to a group of works on paper initiated 2005, in an art world context marked by what could be called hyper-production: ever larger and costlier productions by artists in all kinds of media started to dominate the scene. In this environment the artist's reexamination of such basic tools such as paper and graphite must be seen as a conscious choice, with systemic implications. This type of work can be seen then as a sociological questioning of art (in a certain phase of capitalism) as well as an investigation of the parameters of how art might be meaningful.

Each of the time-based text works is a unique piece, relying - somewhat paradoxically - on the method of repetition. The artist chooses a sentence, a number of nouns or verbs or adjectives, a cluster of terms and so on, in order to write those varying constellations on a sheet of paper (mostly large but also in smaller format). Significantly the artist then retraces each single letter every day consecutively, with no exception, over and over again for the duration of various months, sometimes 3, often 6 and sometimes more, independently from the location, or movements of the producer himself (which means that the works travel with him, sometimes folded to fit the suit case) Such repetition has two visible, and one invisible effect: the graphite writing gets smudged with time, creating side effects of often cloud-like extensions and echoes of the writing hand; with time, the repetition drives the letters in very visible manner deeper into the paper surface, thereby transforming the letters, initially stenciled with a light touch, into almost micro-sculptural zones. But most importantly the repetition creates a durational expanse - and invisible space -, in which the meaning of the words slowly shifts. They undergo countless variations in the mind of the reader (the artist and potentially the viewer), without making it blunt and obvious, without ever rendering those shifting meanings in literal fashion. The repetition creates multiplicity by *sealing* it within.

Some 40 time-based text works have seen the light of day since 2005. Each time conceived as a singular effort, they were not meant to constitute a larger expression that would synthesize the singular efforts. But with hindsight, they've become a fragmentary atlas of all things human, evoking issues such as awareness, personal choice, ambiguous social engagement, failure and missed opportunities, but also integrity and individual strength. Their relations to social, political, historical, and anthropological topics are osmotic. They even point towards metaphysical realities, enabling reflections about time and space (In terms of the wide circumference of levels of reality, they are similar to the major collage work entitled *The World Was Full of Objects and Events and Sounds That Are Known to be Real... II*, 2014.) Almost

pristine, seemingly exquisite and fragile, Vittorio Santoro's time-based drawings examine, in the most unassuming way, the whole spectrum between the intimate apprehension to the transcendental concern or between the material world and the spiritual realm. Their strength lies in the fact that they never explicitly reference any such topics. Instead it is a textual detail – a word, a cascade of terms, a linguistic constellation – that will concentrate, for the viewer, a reluctant, seismic commotion that might echo beyond the limits of imagination.

Daniel Kurjaković  
Curator of Programs, Kunstmuseum Basel

*For more about the Time-Based Text Works please refer to the conversation between Elisabeth Lebovici and Vittorio Santoro, 2006, published online: <http://le-beau-vice.blogspot.com/2007/05/few-words-about-words-conversation-with.html?q=vittorio+santoro>*

**Vittorio Santoro is based in Paris and Zurich. He currently works in Lisbon.**

**Recent or upcoming solo or group exhibitions include:**

Kunstmuseum Luzern, (à venir 2019); Biennial of Contemporary Art, Anafi-Greece (à venir 2019); Counter Space à Art Brussels (à venir 2019); Last Tango, Zurich (2018); Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art, Lisbon (2017); Centre Pompidou, Paris (part of Prix Marcel Duchamp 2017), Kunstmuseum Bern (2017); GreyNoise Gallery, Dubai (UAE) (2017), Counter Space, Zurich (2016); MoCA Pavilion, Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai (2015); Oonagh Young Gallery, Dublin (2015); Galerie Jérôme Poggi, Paris (2014); Counter Space, Zurich (2014); Espace d'art contemporain Louis Vuitton, Paris (2013); Fondation d'Entreprise Ricard, Paris (2012); Galerie Campagne Première, Berlin (2011); Kunsthau Zurich (2011); Rosascape, Paris (2011); Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2011); Yvon Lambert, New York (2011); La BF15, Lyon (2010); Kunstmuseum St. Gallen and Museum der Moderne, Salzburg (2010); Galerie Xippas, Paris (2009); CAC, Vilnius and Kunsthau Zurich (2008); Les Complices, Zurich (2008); Cortex Athletico, Bordeaux (2007); Tate Modern, London (2006); Yvon Lambert, Paris (2003).

**His work is part of the following public collections :**

CAPC, Musée d'art contemporain, Bordeaux; Kunsthau Zürich, Zurich; Musée National d'art moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris; Kunstmuseum Bern, Bern; FNAC (Fonds national d'art contemporain), Paris; Burger Collection, Hong Kong; FRAC Collection-Aquitaine, Bordeaux; Artothèque, Ville de Pessac, Pessac (F); Graphische Sammlung der Schweizerischen Nationalbibliothek (NB), Bern

**We Stare, We Talk, Nov. 2018–March 2019 (2018-19)**

