**MARTIN MARGIELA**

**Double Solo Show**

 **Athens | March 7 – May 15, 2024**

**Brussels | March 14 – May 11, 2024**

The Bernier/Eliades Gallery is pleased to present a double solo show featuring the works of the Belgian artist Martin Margiela in both Athens and Brussels. Margiela's diverse visual practice spans various media, including painting, sculpture, installation, collage, and film. His works attest to his fondness for the overlooked and unconventional. Margiela magnifies both disruptions and poetic junctions, seeking beauty in the fleeting. He believes that objects are always in a state of transformation, and he is intrigued by the traces of time. Important sources of inspiration for the artist are the human body, epidermis, and hair, as well as the urban environment as an infinite place of wonder. Margiela’s work is dedicated to the unknown and the surprising, combined with an exceptional sensibility for materials.

For the show in Athens, Margiela transforms the Gallery and creates a captivating atmosphere. Margiela's work undoubtedly holds a certain romanticism, even though he is known for his radicalism. Sometimes, he might remind us of the phrase from Alphonse de Lamartine, a XIXth century poet, *"Inanimate Objects, Do You Have a Soul ?"*. Through his artistic practice, he likes to awaken inert objects, restore their dignity, underline their uniqueness, and elevate them to a status they've lost. From a neglected object to an idealized one, the step is taken in series such as “Shore Shoes” or "Barriers". In the series "Steps", Martin Margiela employs a rarely-used material, carpet, to create "paintings" that no longer go by the name of "painting". As we move away from them, the effect of depth is striking, the colors become bold and the optical illusion works wonders.

In Margiela’s work, the human body itself is by no means overlooked. It is transformed into individualized parts, objects of study and observation, and its potential for evolution knows no bounds. In his "Torsos" series, a shoulder, a neck, and a torso melt into a base of identical material (with a touch of flesh), suddenly raising questions about the tradition of exhibiting and the way of looking. The black or flesh-colored silicone "Kits" spark guessing and play with the fragmented body parts, evoking childhood memories of building toys found in laundry packets. In "Vanitas" as the son of a hairdresser, the artist reminds the viewer of the relentless march of time, symbolized by the change in hair color from childhood to old age.

Martin Margiela founded Maison Martin Margiela in 1988. Right after the twentieth anniversary of his eponymous brand, Margiela decided to leave the fashion world. Since 2009, he has devoted himself exclusively to the visual arts. During his fashion career, several art museums exhibited his designs, including Bozar (Brussels), Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (Rotterdam), Haus der Kunst (Munich), LACMA (Los Angeles) and Somerset House (London). Since 2021, Martin Margiela has held solo exhibitions of his artworks at Lafayette Anticipations (Paris), M WOODS (Beijing), and LOTTE Museum of Art (Seoul).

Athens opening: Thursday, March 7, 2024, at 18:00 - 21:00.

Athens show until Wednesday, May 15, 2024.

The gallery is open Tuesday - Friday: 11:00 - 18:30 | Saturday: 12:00 - 16:00

**For more information, please contact the Press Office:**

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