

For immediate release

Axel Vervoordt Gallery Hong Kong announces move to new gallery space in Wong Chuk Hang



Kimsooja (°Daegu, 1957), *Deductive Object*, 1997

(Hong Kong – February 18 2019) Five years after opening their first overseas venue in the prime location in Central Hong Kong's Entertainment Building, Axel Vervoordt Gallery is relocating to an expanded two-level space in Wong Chuk Hang, the dynamic artistic hub on the south part of Hong Kong Island. Set to open during Art Basel in Hong Kong from **25 March till 30 March 2019**, this relocation marks an important new step in anchoring Axel Vervoordt Gallery's presence in the region. The 8,000 square foot gallery offers a larger-scale space that will allow the opportunity for curated shows with few limitations, to present larger works and to give artists a great platform for their work.

The Wong Chuk Hang space will enable Axel Vervoordt Gallery to grow their roster of artists, while fostering relationships with contemporary Asian artists and to participate in more regional art fairs such as West Bund (Shanghai) and KIAF (Seoul). The gallery's annual programme includes four exhibitions per year by established artists and punctuated by showcases of work by younger and emerging artists.

The new space will open with a group show entitled, *Infinitive Mutability*, featuring works by Peter Buggenhout, Kimsooja and Bosco Sodi. Taking its cue from Jacques Derrida's concept of deconstruction, the exhibition aims to focus on the limitless shifts of meaning and possibility offered by any new interpretation of a text or a work of visual art.

Axel Vervoordt Gallery is proud to show work of the Belgian artist Peter Buggenhout (1963) for the first time within its own space. His presence in the Hong Kong space may be considered as a prelude to his large solo show in the Antwerp gallery next fall. Buggenhout's work is raw and layered, a visual clash stitched up with organic waste material, like dust, and other visceral, physical materials. The whole often forms colossal, abject and amorphous installations evoking mythical associations. As the artist has stated, his sculptures "cannot be memorised because any singular reading would be incomplete".

Infinitive Mutability will include a sculpture from the *On Hold* series, specifically created for this exhibition. Buggenhout's works have been realised through decisively removing objects from their own original context, retracting them from original shape and meaning and thus opening them up to a multiplicity of meaning. *On Hold* is a quite recent series of works, clearly embodies the uncontrollable, the failure of intent and the steering and paralyzing forces of surrounding structures.

Two early pieces by the Korean multidisciplinary conceptual artist Kimsooja (1957) *Deductive Object* (1997) and *Bottari* (1998) will be present in the exhibition together with the *Thread Routes* project (2012–2015). The selected works show the centrality of textile in the artist's practice and methodology. Kimsooja investigates questions relating to the human condition such as nomadism, migration, and interpersonal relationships.

Bosco Sodi (1970) is presenting a series of paintings and a sculpture trace of his *MURO*, installed earlier this year in the Axel Vervoordt Gallery in Antwerp. *MURO* represents Sodi's first public art intervention, conceived in 2017, for the Washington Square Park sculpture project and performance. In this work, 1600 clay bricks, handcrafted by Oaxacan craftsmen, form a wall intended to continually be transformed through the public's interactions. The artist considers that "a wall can never be eternal" and that all physical and cultural barriers can always be reconfigured through the community's action and will. Sodi develops the depths of bare pigment, the magma that it represents when projected onto a canvas. The mutability for Sodi represents the impossibility for the artist to define and control the constant alteration of the material used for his canvasses.

Axel Vervoordt Gallery

The second floor of the new gallery space is conceived as a large and convivial cabinet where works from different artists from the Axel Vervoordt Gallery can be exhibited in a cyclical turnover. In particular, during the opening, master works from the Gutai and Dansaekhwa movement will be housed in dialogue with works from the Zero Group and Contemporary artists, such as El Anatsui, Kazuo Shiraga, Tsuyoshi Maekawa and Shozo Shimamoto, to name a few.

“This is an exciting moment for the Axel Vervoordt Gallery. We have evolved strongly over the last five years and made important statements with our curated exhibitions along with the publications of our artist’s monographs. We aim to put the same energy in to our exhibitions in Hong Kong as we continue to do in Antwerp, and with the expanded space look to further develop our work as a gallery and mark our presence on the international art scene. We will continue to explore the artistic dialogue between East and West which is so central to the ethos of our organisation,” says Boris Vervoordt, Director Axel Vervoordt Gallery.

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Opening Week: 25-30 March 2019, 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Art Brunch: Friday 29 March at 11 a.m.

Exhibition period: 25 March – 1 June 2019

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Notes to Editors

AXEL VERVOORDT GALLERY

Boris Vervoordt created the Axel Vervoordt Gallery in 2011. The gallery opened in a historic space in the centre of Antwerp with an exhibition by Günther Uecker. Boris chose to open the gallery in the same exact place where his father had mounted exhibitions for Uecker and Jef Verheyen in the 1970s. The first exhibition — and those that followed — linked this new start to the company's long history with art and its original home in the Vlaeykensgang. This continued a path of more than 40 years of working closely with artists.

Boris's goal was to create the best possible platform for solo artists to present their work. Central to the gallery's on-going mission is a commitment to partnering with artist's estates, as well as rediscovering artists whose work was under-appreciated during their lifetimes to preserve and promote their valuable contributions to art history.

The gallery expanded to Asia in 2014 with a space in central Hong Kong in the Entertainment Building. In 2017, the Antwerp gallery moved to a new space at Kanaal, opening with a monumental retrospective of Kazuo Shiraga. The gallery's early program included a specialty in post-war and contemporary art with a specific focus on art from Europe, Japan, and Korea, particularly art from the ZERO and Gutai movements. An emphasis on Dansaekhwa followed, as the gallery's program and participation in global art fairs grew in prominence and its roster of artists expanded.

www.axelvervoordtgallery.com