

ART SENSUS

ANDREI MOLODKIN TRANSFORMER No.V579

16 SEPTEMBER – 17 DECEMBER 2011

PRIVATE VIEW 15 SEPTEMBER 2011

After his first explosive appearance on the London art scene in 2009, Russian artist Andrei Molodkin is returning to Art Sensus with a new site-specific installation. Notorious for the use of controversial materials – blood and oil – Molodkin sparked debate two years ago with his stark political pieces and his plans to turn human bodies into oil to use in his artworks as a symbol of re-birth.

Now comes *Transformer no. V579*, a new body of work produced in Molodkin's signature Constructivist style featuring a monumental corridor of oil and light, a video depicting the artist's creative process and a laboratory of drawings and photographs. Instead of yelling its slogans, like the artist's previous works, this exhibition will rely upon interaction and experience: in order to glean an understanding from Molodkin's minimalist artwork, visitors must engage, participate and communicate with their environment.

Transformer no. V579 is a corridor which visitors may enter and pass through. The structure is realized in hollow, transparent acrylic tubes, filled with oil and industrial light, which form cubed modules. Six of these modules make a corridor 8 meters long, 2.5 meters wide and 2.5 meters high. One half of this structure will « bleed » with oil while its counterpart glows with white light. The oil which courses through the tunnel's « veins » is compared with the blood pumping through a human body. While the oil and light represent simple dichotomies of life and death, purity and greed, the dissimilar substances unite to highlight the interchangeability of these labels. Oil is both a natural substance of an ancient earth and yet the fuel of urban, technological and unnatural power. It is Molodkin's intention that visitors will directly experience an unlikely physiological affinity to this substance and – as leading cultural critic and theorist, Victor Tupitsyn explains – will find themselves « true revolutionaries » upon exiting the installation, « capable of achieving a variety of mutually exclusive goals ». The movement through and within Molodkin's installation could be described as an opportunity to encounter one's lost « identity » as it conjures ideas of conversion, reflection and rebirth.

The second gallery will host a video detailing the construction of *Transformer no. V579*. The third gallery contains what Molodkin has described as a « laboratory » of drawings and photographs which complement and map the development of the artist's creation.

Andrei Molodkin was born in Boui, Northern Russia, in 1966. He studied at the Stroganov Art Institute, Moscow. An ex-soviet soldier and master draftsman, Molodkin started using a simple ballpoint pen – the only medium available to him when serving in the Russian military – to create his first canvases. Referencing tattooing, once illegal in USSR, Molodkin's gigantic labour-intensive drawings were the first in a series of works to critically address iconization in a global contemporary culture (*Empire at War*, 2006; *Ceci n'est pas Carla*, 2007). Other bodies of work have used (albeit deconstructively) religious icons and political slogans as indelible prints, moulded into hollowed, transparent acrylic blocks and pumped half full with Iraqi or Chechen oil. This method was employed when Molodkin erected his *Winged Victory of Samothrace* at the 53rd Venice Biennale, 2009. The artist now lives and works between Paris and Moscow. Molodkin's museum show « Double Justice » (October 2011, Station Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston, Texas) will present art works based around *WikiLeaks*.

PRESS INFORMATION

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