

JOSEPH KOSUTH

‘Existential Time’

Opening: Thursday 24th October 2019, h.6.30pm
Galleria Lia Rumma | Via Stilicone 19 | MILAN
Gallery opening hours: Tuesday-Saturday 11am-1.30pm / 2.30-7pm

Lia Rumma Gallery is pleased to announce ‘Existential Time’, a major exhibition by Joseph Kosuth. The artist continues his work considering the thinking of Samuel Beckett following his last exhibition in the gallery in 2010. This presentation, which approaches the problem of time and existence from a variety of references through other writers, brings together installation and individual works across the ground and first floors of the gallery, including an outdoor installation on the gallery terrace. The show centres around a play on Samuel Beckett’s concept and use of *existential time*, while including different source material from various thinkers.

The show includes the project, ‘Quoted Use’ on the second floor, presenting editioned objects and furniture produced in collaboration with Schellmann Art, Munich. This project appropriates usable personal objects and furniture from a selection of influential cultural figures including Jane Austen, Samuel Beckett, Simone de Beauvoir, Charles Darwin, Marcel Duchamp, Albert Einstein, Søren Kierkegaard and Virginia Woolf.

Kosuth’s reflection on time in this exhibition stems from both a personal and philosophical concern with finding meaning within the various contexts life provides. It is thus also an investigation into the process of making meaning in artistic practice. The artist anchors and provides the *tempo* for the viewer/reader’s fluid experience of the show through the use of the analogue clock. Time is thus referenced both literally and figuratively.

Kosuth removes the necessity of objective shared truth while experiencing the work and highlights the freedom, choice and responsibility inherent in everyday experience as well as artistic practice in general. The exhibition as a whole is a reflection on the gap that holds together *beginnings* and *ends*. Kosuth’s ‘Existential Time’ endeavours to punctuate the lack, limits and surplus of meaning surrounding the experience of time and life, while exploring the powerful and finite territory of the present.

Lia Rumma invited Kosuth to exhibit in her very first gallery show “The Eighth Investigation (A.A.I.A.I.)” that inaugurated the gallery in Naples in 1971. The subject of time has remained a leitmotif between them. The current exhibition can also be viewed as a second chapter and as an evolution and departure from Kosuth’s exhibition unveiled at the gallery in 2010 referring to Samuel’s Beckett’s “Texts for Nothing”.

Joseph Kosuth (b 1945, USA) is one of the pioneers of Conceptual art and installation art, initiating language based works and appropriation strategies in the 1960s. His work has consistently explored the production and role of language and meaning within art. His more than fifty year inquiry into the relation of language to art has taken the form of installations, museum exhibitions, public commissions and publications throughout Europe, the Americas and Asia, including seven Documenta(s) and 14 Venice Biennale(s), one of which was presented in the Hungarian Pavilion (1993).

Awards include the Brandeis Award, 1990, Frederick Wiseman Award, 1991, the *Menzione d’Onore* at the Venice Biennale, 1993, and the *Chevalier de l’ordre des Arts et des Lettres* from the French government in 1993. In June 1999, a 3.00 franc postage stamp was issued by the French Government in honor of his work in Figeac. In February 2001, he received the *Laura Honoris Causa*, doctorate in Philosophy and Letters from the University of Bologna. In October 2003 he received the Austrian Republic’s highest honour for accomplishments in science and culture, the Decoration of Honour in Gold for services to the Republic of Austria. In 2012 Kosuth received *la classe des Arts de l’Académie Royale* from the Académie Royale Sciences des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts of Belgium. In 2015 the Instituto Superior de Arte, at the University of Havana, awarded him an *Honoris Causa* doctorate, presented during the 12th Havana Art Biennial where he exhibited an extensive installation at the Biblioteca Nacional.

