

## Press release

### HAIM STEINBACH

#### *Works 1983-2006*

Opening Wednesday 11 April, 7.00 pm

Galleria Lia Rumma Milan, Via Solferino, 44 – 20121 Milan

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Gallery opening hours: Tuesdays to Saturdays, from 11.00 am to 1.00 pm and from 3.00 pm to 7 pm

The new exhibition of Haim Steinbach's work covers some of the most important phases of his artist's career and documents the longstanding relationship between the artist and the Lia Rumma Gallery. The works on display were made between 1983 and 2006.

Haim Steinbach's works are made from objects found and collected from everyday contexts. The artist appropriates them, isolates them and places them alongside other objects of a different kind, creating a sort of sign language with multiple meanings. The objects are usually placed on shelves and together form a single work. Even the shelves can be considered to be objects in their own right with their own specific function. In the works which date from the early eighties, the shelves were handmade and took the form of discovered objects. For this reason, as from 1984, the shelves began to take on standardised forms whose size depended on the dimensions of the objects they were intended to support. From this point onwards, Steinbach's works took on a new formal rigour. The formulation and juxtaposition of the objects and shelves belong to a tradition whose origins can be traced back to the reliefs of constructivist artists and the installations of Minimal Art. The orderly arrangement and combination of objects of different origins evoke the antithetical concepts of order and chaos which so typify contemporary society.

Some of the works in the exhibition derive from direct encounters between the artist, places he has visited and people he has met over the years. For example, Steinbach's work *Untitled (sandals, chair)*, made in 1987, stems from an amusing episode in which several pairs of children's sandals and a chair were purchased from a flea market in Naples. Another work inspired by Naples is entitled *Neapolitan tableau*, which also dates to 1987; it was made as the result of the purchase of several objects found in antiques shops located near to the Lia Rumma Gallery in Naples. By contrast, in the case of works made especially for a collector, such as *Untitled (4 airplanes)*, the artist has selected a specific type of object which represents a sort of portrait of the person who he has encountered.

Haim Steinbach was born in Rechvot, Israel in 1944. Ever since the early eighties he has established himself as one of the most significant figures on the international art scene. He has taken part in important international events such as *Documenta IX* at Kassel in 1992 and the Venice Biennial in 1993 and 1997. Among the recent exhibitions to feature his works, we would like to highlight *Artists' Gifts* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles and *Definitively Provisional* at the Whitechapel Project Space, London in 2003, *East Village USA*, at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York in 2004, and *In the Darkest Hour, There May Be Light* at the Serpentine Gallery, London in 2006. He currently lives and works in New York.

The artist will be present at the opening.