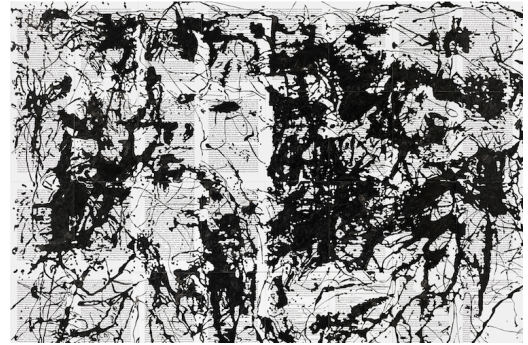


Art & Language  
*Picasso's Guernica in the Style of Jackson Pollock*  
(Essay II)

exhibition 17 jan - 13 mar  
preview 16 jan 6:30 - 8 pm

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Art & Language, *Picasso's Guernica in the Style of Jackson Pollock (Essay II)* (detail)

Sprovieri is proud to present *Picasso's Guernica in the Style of Jackson Pollock (Essay II)*, the second collaboration with Art & Language, who is represented by the Lisson Gallery.

*Picasso's Guernica in the Style of Jackson Pollock (Essay II)*, 1980-2019, is a large rectangular work on paper, where the powerful and dramatic painting by Picasso *Guernica* is disguised as a Pollock-like painting. The work was not produced by means of the 'literal' use of Pollock's well known technique. It is rather a drawing in which drips and spatters are represented or depicted. The drawing is made with Indian ink on 114 sheets of Teslin, printed with essays and texts written by the artists themselves between 1980 and 2016.

*Portrait of V.I. Lenin* is the title of the first of these essays - published in the magazine *Artforum* in 1980 - which explores the topics of realism, representation and authenticity. It is accompanied by nine other texts which were published by Art & Language in a variety of art-historical and philosophical journals.

The first artwork titled *Picasso's Guernica in the Style of Jackson Pollock* is now part of the Collection of S.M.A.K., Gent. This work makes 'literal' use of Pollock's technique and was among the first in Art & Language's oeuvre considered by them as a painting 'We wondered whether we could transpose the highly-charged historical dimension of Picasso's 'Guernica' into a painting in the Pollock style, specifically his renowned black and white Düsseldorf style'. (Art & Language, 2013)

Art & Language challenges the value placed on identity, uniqueness, authenticity and exchange in the art world. Employing multiple media such as texts, installations and music, the group questions the essence and role of the art object and its authority, as well as the role of art institutions, artists and audiences.

*For us, Conceptual Art was never a mature professional style but a black box (or a black box in a black box); what is sometimes called 'a genuine historical moment', changing forever whatever happened 'next'. What happened in that moment inaugurated a process and a project. And it was given to this project to recognise that there continue to be baffling relations between text, pictures and painting, and that the expulsion of the two latter from the purview of the artist is a cheap closure which fails to recognise the constructedness of the world...Art & Language's practice has been project-like and essay-like. And this entails that it must be a critical practice...a collaborative practice. Work, in the sense of non-wordy action and its consequences, is embedded and then re-embedded in conversation, until the edges of what is work and what isn't work vanish and then re-appear in different places.* ('Making Meaningless', Art & Language in Practice (cat) Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona, 1999).

#### About the artists

Art & Language: (Michael Baldwin, born 1945; Mel Ramsden, born 1944) is a pioneering English conceptual art group first founded in Coventry, England, by Michael Baldwin, David Bainbridge, Terry Atkinson and Harold Hurrell. In 1970 the late critic and art historian Charles Harrison and the artist Mel Ramsden both became associated with the group. Art & Language participated in Documenta 5, 7, X (1972, 1982, 1997); the Xéme Biennale Internationale d'Art, Menton (1974); the Venice Biennale (1976 and 2003); in 1986 they were nominated for the Turner Prize. They have had international gallery and museum exhibitions continuously since 1967 including: Kunstsaele, Berlin (2017); MACBA, Barcelona (2014); Dhondt-Dhaenens, Belgium (2013); Migros Museum, Zurich (2012); CAC, Málaga (2004); (2002); ZKM, Karlsruhe (2000); PS1, New York (1999); Tàpies Foundation, Barcelona (1999); Jeu de Paume, Paris (1992); Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels (1987); Tate Gallery, London (1985); Musee d'Art Moderne Toulon (1982); Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (1980); Museum of Modern Art, Oxford (1974). Group exhibition include: National Picasso Museum, Paris (2017); Tate Britain, London, (2016); Museet for Samtidskunst, Roskilde (2014); Hayward Gallery, London (2012), Turner Contemporary, Margate, Kent (2009) among others.