

ATTIC

Alighiero Boetti / Zoë Paul
September 11, 2015 - October 31, 2015

On the occasion of the inauguration of ATTIC, we have the pleasure to present a confrontation between the work of young artist Zoë Paul, with the historical work of Alighiero Boetti. The selected works of both artists are textile works, presenting a common theme of exploration of society and the relation between art and everyday objects, referring to ancient and traditional techniques for the realisation of the artworks.

In her series of wool weavings on old fridge grills named *Hand Sign* Zoë Paul explores the relation between craftsmanship and society, in choosing the everyday domestic product of the fridge grill as support for the works, alluding to the traditional technique of weaving to create an abstracted image. The choice of the fridge grill as frame is related to its importance in changing society, especially in the Mediterranean cultures where the warm climate made food preservation difficult prior to the introduction of modern fridges. This disposed domestic object is combined with a technique intended for the production of household textiles, creating a dual representation of society where human labour is merged with the mass produced industrial object. The language of the hand gesture is researched from orthodox iconography. How each finger holds its own representation is a concept derived from ancient Greek paganism, and has been incorporated both in Christian ideology, but also in palmistry and heresy. The weaving technique is used to create an abstract, pixelated image, hiding a message inside it.

The presented works of Alighiero Boetti are from the series *Arazzi*, which are colorful embroideries containing more or less abstract phrases. While these works are from the period after he left the Arte Povera movement, they are still in line with the movement's concept of breaking down the hierarchy between art and common objects, through the use of conventional and domestic techniques and materials for the creation of artworks. The work of Boetti also entailed a reflection on society through his concept of "mettere al mondo il mondo" - bringing the world into the world, an attempt of turning the world back on itself to reflect itself more clearly as it is, not as a new world. Boetti's practice of producing ordinary objects such as tapestries sprung from this philosophy, and through his intervention these objects, that are by nature items that play a central role in the everyday life of ordinary people, become artworks on display in museums and galleries all over the world. For the series *Arazzi* he prepared the designs with his assistants, and the works were then created by Afghan women, first in Afghanistan, then in Pakistan after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, using traditional embroidery techniques. The mosaic-like grids of block letters in vivid colors depict phrases found in poetry, wisdoms or sayings, creating a bridge between imagery and the written word. While these phrases are not difficult to distinguish their meanings are sometimes difficult to grasp, adding an element of disorder to the orderly form of these tapestries, stemming from the notion of duality and dichotomy that captivated Boetti and marked his oeuvre.

The selected works of Zoë Paul and Alighiero Boetti both explore, through the same type of medium, the relation between art and society, between the object as it is and the object elevated to a higher realm through the intervention of the artist. Both of them display an interest in the relation between cultures, in Boetti's case that of the bridge between East and West, in Paul's that of the impact of ancient Greek culture and its traditions on modern society.

Alighiero Boetti (1940 – 1994) was an Italian conceptual artist, considered to be a member of the art movement Arte Povera.

Zoë Paul (b. 1987, London) Lives and works in Athens, Greece. (www.zoepaul.co.uk)