

MARCELO BRODSKY: Imagination to Power

Opening Reception: Thursday March 17, 6-9 pm

Exhibition runs through April 23, 2016

Gallery Hours: Monday to Friday 11-6 pm

Henrique Faria Fine Art is pleased to present *Imagination to Power*, Marcelo Brodsky's first exhibition with the gallery. Bringing together a selection of photographs and a video work that span the artist's career, this exhibition demonstrates the artist's deep commitment to addressing human rights abuses and the social, political and historical events that surround them. By gaining access and rights to historical photographs and intervening in the stark black and white imagery with colorful oil pastels, Brodsky breathes new life into these archival images, and importantly, gives a narrative voice to those that had been silenced and keeps the memories of those affected in the present consciousness.

As Anne Wilkes Tucker writes in the exhibition essay, "Constant throughout his art is a deep understanding of the potential power of photographs, both at the moment of their creation as news and, for some, a long subsequent life in publications and memories." Brodsky broaches this subject in his work *La Clase (The Class)* (1996) from the larger series *Buena Memoria (Good Memory)*. After returning to his native Buenos Aires after his exile in Spain, Brodsky found his 1967 class photograph from the Colegio Nacional de Buenos Aires and was compelled to find out what had become of his former classmates. Following the reunions in Buenos Aires, New York City and Spain, Brodsky returned to the photograph of smiling, young faces, and in brightly colored oil pastels described the lives some currently lead and the fates that had befallen others at the hands of the military junta and the Dirty War. Also forming part of *Buena Memoria* is the piece *Jugando a Morir (Playing at Dying)* (1997), which allows the viewer privy to another personal moment in Brodsky's life, a video taken by the artist's father on an 8mm camera that shows Brodsky and his younger brother, Fernando, playing war and eventually succumbing to one another's inflicted "wounds". Tucker notes, "When placed in the context of the other works in the show, this innocent piece is redirected from a sweet memory of youthful exercise to the separation of the brothers after Fernando was kidnapped and disappeared by the military dictatorship in 1979."

The triptych *I Pray with my Feet* (2014) and the series *1968, The Fire of Ideas* (2014-15) each speak to the tide of social unrest that swept worldwide during the mid-twentieth century. *I Pray with my Feet* features civil rights defenders Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Rabbis Abraham Joshua Herschel and Marshall T. Meyer and *1968, The Fire of Ideas* features the anonymous marchers that comprised the protests held in Bogotá to Paris to Prague. The protagonists of these works, applying the tenets of civil disobedience and non-violence, risked their lives to make their world a better place and to bring to light the corruption and brutality that shrouded many different communities. While these protestors used their bodies as the physical tools for their dissent, Brodsky uses the potency of the image to empower the viewer, to raise awareness and to honor the historical ideas and events that have shaped the way future generations have seen and experienced the world around them.

During his exile in Barcelona in the late 1970s and 80s, **Marcelo Brodsky** (Buenos Aires, 1954), an economics graduate from the University of Barcelona, was trained as a photographer at the International Center of Photography, Barcelona, by the Catalanian photographer Manel Esclusa. In 1997 Brodsky edited and exhibited the photographic essay *Buena Memoria (Good Memory)* based on the effects of state terrorism in Argentina. Between 1997 and 2007, the exhibition was presented more than 120 times in 26 countries, both as a one-man show and as part of other artistic projects. The book/catalogue of the exhibition is included in Martin Parr's and Gerry Badger's *The Photo book, A History*. Building on the momentum of *Buena Memoria*, Brodsky has continued creating and exhibiting work based on the ideas of collective memory, oblivion and human rights abuses around the world. His work also focuses in the relationship between word and image, in the intervention of images with text, the use of archival images, and other resources to build up a narrative and the use of photography as language. Throughout his career he has created visual correspondences in collaboration with other artists, working on the possibilities of photography as language and how far a visual exchange can go. His recent work is based on a careful edition of archival images that he licenses and intervenes with inscriptions to create a complex narrative based on visual connections, historical references, annotations and audio. Some of his projects include *I Pray with My Feet* (2014) and *1968, The Fire of Ideas* (2014-15).

His work is featured in public collections worldwide including, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Princeton University Art Museum; the Tate Collection, UK; ESCALA, University of Essex; the Sprengel Museum, Hannover; the Pinacoteca do Estado, Sao Paulo; the Museo de Arte Moderna, Recife; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires; Museo de Arte Moderno MAMBA, Buenos Aires; Museo de Arte de Lima; Coleccion Celarg, Venezuela; Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos, Santiago de Chile; and the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende, Santiago de Chile. Brodsky is a member of the Board of Directors of the Park of Memory for the Victims of State Terrorism and the Monument for the Missing during the military dictatorship in Buenos Aires. Brodsky's work seeks to communicate to the new generations in a different way, based on emotion and sensorial experience with a contemporary visual language.

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