

## PRESS RELEASE

CLAIRE FONTAINE  
DESTROY AND REJUVENATE

30/01 -21/03/009

Opening: January 30, Friday, 18:00-21:00

Regina Gallery is pleased to announce the first solo exhibition of Claire Fontaine in Moscow, *Destroy and rejuvenate*. Claire Fontaine is a collective artist based in Paris and founded in 2004. Through her practice she questions the political impotency and the crisis of singularity that seems to characterise contemporary life today, experimenting with protocols of collective production, détournements, and the production of various devices for the sharing of intellectual and private property.

*Destroy and rejuvenate* is a controversial quotation taken from the most ambiguous text by Walter Benjamin, *The destructive character*. In this text Benjamin affirms that the main virtue of the destructive character is to free space, to make room. Often associated to the concept of “positive barbarism”, the destruction that Benjamin evokes clears the mental collective space and generates a sort of revolutionary memory that helps mankind to go towards a freer and more emancipated future. The neon sign, *Destroy and rejuvenate* is a homage to Walter Benjamin and gives the title to the exhibition.

The two *Passe-Partout* sculptures relate directly to Moscow and refer to the two faces of this fascinating town, the extraordinary luxury and extreme poverty. The *Passe-partout* works are sets of home made lock-picks used to illegally enter locked doors; they are customized with trinkets that recall the identity of the town where the artist had some economical and affective transaction. Their sense is to provide a possible use value to the collector – by making him into a potential thief – and to create a zone of ambiguity between the market and theft.

*AMERIKA* is a neon sign written in the K. font, a font created by the artist and composed of fluorescent neon strip lights, the cheapest lighting system commonly used in schools, hospitals, factories, prisons and all sort of disciplinary places. The K. font was named after Kafka. In Kafka's novel entitled, *Amerika*, the protagonist, Karl Rossmann, embodies the figure of the generous and altruistic young man that will be rejected by everyone and forced to emigrate towards an uncertain future in the most unwelcoming country in the world: Amerika..

*AMERIKA* is a monument to the immigrants that have faced long and difficult trips in order to have a richer life and who were left only with broken dreams and their solitude.

The series of paintings of anonymous hands are visual questions about the responsibility of people in their everyday actions. They postulate by their simplicity and poverty an equivalence between the actions that they display (voting, playing, breaking, paying) and serve as a figuration of the range of legal actions that our bodies can still perform in the public space.

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