

Fifteen Minutes of Fame

Riccardo Previdi, Javier Rodriguez

13 September - 27 October 2012

Predicting in 1968 that ‘in the future, everyone would be world-famous for 15 minutes’, Andy Warhol anticipated just how soon that future would come and how long a quarter of an hour would feel then. The future did soon come, and with it arrived oversized events, myriad experiences, countless personalities, a sense of urgency, and a loss of boundaries between the global and the personal.

Alongside fame, the super-productive gland, developed an industry of endless change, of instant propagation and cognition. We’ve seen stars born and falling, media created and destroyed, voices in crescendos and silence. Come to think of it, it’s surprising that anything appears to be lasting at all.

The very instruments of longevity are materials in the practices of Riccardo Previdi and Javier Rodriguez. The artists witness the ongoing transfiguration of the universal into the particular, and the solid into the abstract. Crossing scales and time signatures, they lay foundations for monuments to the fleeting, the abandoned, and the disowned.

Seen in the UK for the first time, Riccardo Previdi’s test prints separate out the constituents of everyday image and its life-cycle. Enlarged, saturated and now three-dimensional, these images which may have originally depicted low-key happenings like family vacations or banal still lives, are here presented with authority, but are also destroyed, recycled, and entirely subjugated to their form. The standardised handling procedures applied by the artist iterate the images into the absurd. In the end, the glossy surfaces shatter.

A new project sees Previdi create a particular hall-of-fame from images taken by customers of mobile phone shops. Recognising the arbitrary and disposable nature of the material, the artist advances this user-generated-content into its most likely form: non-proprietary and replicable, but nonetheless boasting permanence and significance.

Javier Rodriguez’s new work renders world-changing events plastic and pliable, by setting news headlines in ink-stamp rubber. Mimicking the lithographic printing process, in which *lithos*, stone, pressed against paper, makes a lasting impression, here, the stories and events are variable and potential. In this home-office format, factual events which may themselves be engraved in stone in monuments or memorials, are available to all to reproduce and alter by hand.

Elsewhere, Rodriguez undertakes a consistent deconstruction of the canonical views of world history – as presented by Western textbooks and encyclopaedic publications. Page by page and event by event, the artist punches holes in long-held beliefs and authoritative versions, producing party confetti in the process. History becomes pop.

With time, Warhol became weary of being asked about the ‘15 minutes’, and amused himself by twisting the sentence to confuse interviewers. ‘In the future, 15 people will be famous.’ ‘In 15 minutes, everybody will be famous.’ A similar sense of weariness allows Previdi and Rodriguez to explore their source materials at will, moving from high to low, and from monumental to trivial.press release