



MARTINEZ GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

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50/50

NEW YORK - Martinez Gallery is proud to present the first solo exhibition of German/French graffiti artist couple MINA & BRUCE in New York.

Artist:

MINA & BRUCE

MARCH 11 -
APRIL, 2017

RECEPTION:
SAT, MARCH 11,
6PM - 12AM

For the last several years, in major European cities, street art and graffiti have been experiencing what some observers and critics are characterizing as a cultural revival. But their respective fortunes are very different. Although street art was until recently seen as an illegal activity that kept tourists and so-called art lovers away, today, many cities – including Barcelona, Berlin, Lisbon, London, and Rome – are falling all over each other in the competition to support, promote, and showcase the best street art murals that Europe can offer. In these cities, thousands of street artists have been busy covering the facades of old and abandoned buildings, as well as the ‘free walls’ provided in some locales by the authorities themselves, with writing, color, and narratives that are transforming the urban landscape, grabbing the attention of locals and foreigners alike, and even giving rise to a new kind of tourism. By contrast, graffiti is still illegal, still considered a form of vandalism, and ‘street bombers’ still struggle to find ways to express themselves as they always did, in hiding from the authorities.

The team of MINA & BRUCE is part of this art revival, and, in some ways, they have benefited from the new policies that encourage and promote street art murals under official tutelage. Meanwhile, their graffiti writing is another matter. Yet the French/German artist couple first met in Paris because of graffiti. Both had been writing for a long time before they met and began their artistic collaboration in 2011. Today, they travel around Europe and New York creating their work, both on the streets and in galleries. MINA likes mostly to draw faces and hands, legs and shoes, etc., whereas BRUCE is into ‘street bombing’ and ‘throw-ups.’ One day, they woke up and realized that they could mix the two, adding expression to their letters and creating characters out of them. They call these figures ‘throw up characters.’ ‘In the end, the throw-up always is like an icon, it always looks kind of the same, like a stamp,’ BRUCE says, while working on the exhibition at Martinez Gallery. ‘We found a way to make them come to life, to change them and to have kind of an interaction in between [BRUCE’s and my own] letters,’ MINA interjects. (50/50)

The result is their trademark, what makes them different and identifies their work from among the thousands of writings and drawings covering the streets of Europe these days. In general, these throw-up characters are always colorful – and always different, even if they all start with the same letters of MINA’s and BRUCE’s names. All these drawings are striking for their simplicity and efficiency of style. In one case, they ‘portray’ a firefighter; in another, the Statue of Liberty, or a detective pursuing a thief; and, in several cases, they pay homage to the films they like, such as The Warriors, and, of course, Bonnie and Clyde. They mostly enjoy bombing on the street spontaneously, without preconceptions, inspired by their surroundings, by the cities they have visited, by the tricks they have learned, by other writings and tags, by people they have met, by films, by music. That is what makes them feel free, what transcends the borders, what connects cultures, peoples, and languages. For them, graffiti is that open field of artistic expression.

For more
information:

www.martinezgalleries.com

For their exhibition at Martinez Gallery they are creating drawings; large wood sculptures related to the drawings; and murals, encapsulating and creating their universe. We are sure that the viewer will enter a total experiential environment.