

GALERIE LELONG

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ANGELO FILOMENO

The marquis and a bearded dominatrix with a cake in the oven

September 10 - October 23, 2010

Opening reception: Friday, September 10, 6 to 8 pm

In *The marquis and a bearded dominatrix with a cake in the oven*, Angelo Filomeno will present new embroidery paintings and sculpture that exemplify his signature technique and fascination with the macabre. For the exhibition, Filomeno enlists some of his regular characters—insects, dead philosophers, grotesque objects—and incorporates elements previously unseen in his works. The exhibition will open to the public on Friday, September 10 from 6 to 8 pm, and the artist will be present.

Fantastical and allegorical in imagery, and intricate in technique, Filomeno's works are deeply informed by his upbringing in Italy. Filomeno learned to embroider from his mother and began apprenticing for a tailor when he was 7; his father was a blacksmith. From a young age, Filomeno formed a keen awareness of texture, composition, detail, and craftsmanship. He also developed an interest in the darker facets of the human condition: mortality, isolation, compulsion, fragility. These stark themes have pervaded his work, juxtaposed with the use of alluring, sensuous materials such as silk, black glass, and crystals.

In his newest exhibition, Filomeno pares down the ornate approach for which he is best known and presents sparser, more concise works that evoke the artist's common themes with minimal means. Included are two large-scale *mandalas*, embroidered mosaics of stitched silk and satin in varying shades of yellow. The concentric rings of geometric patterns and bright yellow hues beckon the viewer to gaze deeper and deeper in to the piece, only to be confronted by a sinister skull and hoards of cockroaches hidden in their centers. Also on view will be a triptych of detached, decomposing heads of men he deems 'philosophers,' a character that he has revisited throughout his career as a paradigm of the harsh aspects of mortality and reflection. "The irony," Filomeno has said, "is that these portraits represent death, but they are still thinking about their own existence."

With their heads isolated at the center of the panels, their faces seemingly frozen in time, the philosopher triptych evokes Filomeno's sculptures, which will also be exhibited. The main sculptural work on view will be a long table displaying hand-blown glass objects - instruments that could have been plucked from the Marquis de Sade's bedside, laid out amongst skulls appearing to have washed up from the ocean, awaiting redemption. Also included will be a large sculpture of hematite and wood resembling an abstracted African headdress with hints of bondage found in the metal and black leather detailing. The work is accompanied by a series of seven black embroidered paintings, each piece depicting a tribal mask emerging from the dark canvas. With these new, expansive works and series of embroidery paintings, Filomeno persists in his investigation of human limitations and our continuing attempts to transcend them.

The marquis and a bearded dominatrix with a cake in the oven is the artist's second exhibition at Galerie Lelong. Since his first exhibition, 2008's *Betrayed Witches*, Filomeno has presented a solo exhibition at the Savannah College of Art and Design and has been featured in 12 group exhibitions, including *Damaged Romanticism* at the Grey Art Gallery at New York University; *Wonderland: Through the Looking Glass*, KAdE Kunsthal, Amersfoort, the Netherlands; and the annual invitational exhibition at the National Academy Museum & School of Fine Arts, New York. Filomeno's work is in various international museum collections including Centre Pompidou, Paris, France, and the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan.

Hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm

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Next exhibition: Ana Mendieta: Documentation and Artwork 1972-85, October 28 – December 11, 2010