

GALERIE MITTERRAND

FRED WILSON

VENICE SUITE: SALA LONGHI

AND RELATED WORKS

FEB 7 > MARCH 22 2014

PRIVATE VIEW THURSDAY FEB 6

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JGM. Galerie has the pleasure to announce the second solo show in France of American artist Fred Wilson, titled Venice Suite: Sala Longhi and Related Works, the show will run from February 7 until March 22 2014. The artist will present a series of works exploring his relationship with the city of Venice and the rich traditions of Venetian glass manufacturing.

Through the course of Postcolonial studies, the work of Fred Wilson acts as a re-reading of the museography in our treatment of historical artifacts descended from white civilizations. Wilsons work often inverts the symbolic value of objects that the artist "recycles" for their historical and cultural meanings. Besides the racial critique examined in Wilsons work and exhibitions, it is more commonly the relationship of power disseminated through the history of art which lays at the heart of his artistic practice.

The first work in Murano glass that Wilson created is the impressive ceiling light *Speak Of Me As I Am: Chandelier Mori* (2003) which was presented at the 50th Venice Biennale as part of Wilson solo show at the American Pavilion. The exhibition at JGM. Galerie includes the third chandelier in this series *To Die Upon A Kiss* (2011) in which the title has been borrowed from *Othello*. This work of 1.8 m in height is characterized by the degradation in colour exertive from clear transparency to opaque blackness. *Emilia's Mirror - Act 5, Scene 2* (2013) an opulent mirror of 2 meters in height also forms part of the show. It's title references the character (the woman from Iago) and to a scene from Shakespeare's Venetian tragedy. In order to create this work, Wilson has worked with the artisans in Murano to develop an innovative process of superimposing on traditional mirrored glass.

The central work in this exhibition is the installation *Sala Longhi* (2011) Inspired by a cycle of paintings by the 18th century Venetian artist Pietro Longhi, which can be seen in the Sala Longhi at the Museo del Settecento Veneziano Ca' Rezzonico, The work is composed of 28 panels of black glass and a large central panel from which comes out an elegant candelabra in white Murano glass. Each panel has been cut by the artist, leaving empty spaces in the immaculate black surface featuring the faces in Longhi's paintings. The scenes of social and domestic Venetian life created by Longhi come before the fall of the Republic in 1797 and the occupation of the city by Napoleons armies. Wilson explains that he has perhaps felt "it is an analogy between our time and the work of Longhi. I visited the Longhi room at the Museo del Settecento for the first time in 2009. Before the collapse of Lehman Brothers in September 2008, New York in much the same way as Longhi's Venice, was filled with arousal and excess - the abundance of money and opportunity seemed endless. I remember feeling that a somber cloud had come into being on the economic horizon."

Fred Wilson (born in 1954, Bronx, NY) represented the United States of America at the 50th Venice Biennale in 2003 with his exhibition "Speak Of Me As I Am". His work was subsequently shown in two editions of "Glasstress" within the 53rd and 54th Venice Biennales which focused on the use of glass in the work of historical and contemporary artists. He has been the center of a number of exhibitions within institutions across the world and his work can be seen in a number of important public collections including that of the Tate (Great-Britain), MoMA, Whitney Museum of Contemporary Art and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (USA).

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