

Wallpaper*: 'First love: Francesco Vezzoli unveils Eternal Kiss at Almine Rech Gallery' by Jessica Klingelfuss, September 10, 2015

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First love: Francesco Vezzoli unveils 'Eternal Kiss' at Almine Rech Gallery

ART / 10 SEP 2015 / BY JESSICA KLINGELFUSS



Installation view of Francesco Vezzoli's *Eternal Kiss*, recently opened at Almine Rech Gallery in London. *Courtesy of the artist and Almine Rech Gallery.*
Photography: Prudence Cuming Associates Ltd

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Vezzoli explains: 'The main objective of *Eternal Kiss* is to use the process of aesthetic restoration to re-enact a fictional kiss from two thousand years ago.'
Courtesy of the artist and Almine Rech Gallery. Photography: Prudence Cuming Associates Ltd

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PHOTOGRAPHY

'Eternal Kiss' is on view until 3
October 2015

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They say love conquers all, or, in the case of Italian artist Francesco Vezzoli's latest artwork: 2000-odd years coupled with a painstakingly meticulous restoration process. Freshly unveiled at London's Almine Rech Gallery, *Eternal Kiss* features a pair of ancient marble busts locked in a fictional embrace.

Vezzoli acquired the sculptures at auction and together with a team of archaeologists has restored the Roman portraits of a man (circa second century AD) and a woman (Imperial, Hadrianic, circa 117-138 AD) to their original state. Exploring notions of beauty and the artifact, Vezzoli takes on the role of surgeon as he nips and tucks his subjects, mending their broken features and imbuing them with new personas.

This show marks the Milan-based artist's return to London following a nine-year absence (his last outing here, in stark contrast to Almine Rech Gallery's intimate space, was held at the Tate Modern). 'The exhibition will focus on the objects themselves. *Eternal Kiss* will become nothing less than the most ancient sculpture of a kiss in existence. It's as simple – or as complicated – as that,' muses Vezzoli.

ALMINE RECH GALLERY

So what next for the multifaceted artist? He's directed a new film starring Cindy Sherman as an ageing diva, which will be unveiled next month in Greece as part of Rufus Wainwright's opera *Prima Donna*.