ALMINE RECH

John Giorno
God is Man Made

Nov 21 — Dec 19, 2015 | Paris

In parallel with the exhibition 'UGO RONDINONE : I ✌ GIORNO' at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, Almine Rech Gallery is pleased to present 'GOD IS MAN MADE', John Giorno's fourth solo exhibition at the gallery. The exhibition will feature exclusively new works from his recent series 'Rainbow Paintings'.

John Giorno was born in 1936 in New York. After graduating from Columbia University, Giorno moved to the Bowery in the mid-1960s where he joined a vibrant art scene. He quickly became close with Brion Gysin, William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg and Andy Warhol, featuring in the latter's famous movie 'Sleep' (1963). At the crossroads between poetry, visual arts, music and performance, the work of this key figure of the American underground scene has been an influence on several generations of artists such as Elizabeth Peyton, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Pierre Huyghes and Ugo Rondinone.

From the beginning, Giorno aimed at opening up poetry to an audience wider than its usual public. He is considered to be the inventor of 'Performance Poetry', intense and vividly performed poetry readings in front of an audience, and of 'Dial-A-Poem' (1968), a free telephone line to connect listeners to recordings of poems, which was groundbreaking for using this type of communications technology. For several years he has also been creating what he calls 'Poem Paintings': works where typography and colors play an essential role, evoking both advertising slogans and buddhist mantras. Composed of sentences from his own writings, these works borrow from a variety of media: painting, drawing, watercolor and screen printing. Thus taken out of their purely literary context, poetic works such as these redefine the contours of our relationship with words and language.

The work of John Giorno has been presented at numerous institutions, including the Palais de Tokyo in Paris and the Flux Laboratory in Carouge, Switzerland (both 2015); during the opening exhibition of the Louis Vuitton Foundation, Paris (2014); at the art center Faux Movement in Metz (2012); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2012); and the Centre Pompidou, Paris (2008).

The exhibition UGO RONDINONE : I ✌ JOHN GIORNO takes place at the Palais de Tokyo until January 10, 2016. John Giorno will present three performances in the coming weeks: November 18, 2015 at the Palais de Tokyo as part of the Paris Autumn Festival; November 23, 2015 at the Centre Pompidou-Metz; and November 25, 2015 at Maison Rouge Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris.