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Adam McEwen

Feeling called love

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Adam McEwen has gained international recognition through emblematic series such as the « Obituaries » (obituary articles about still living persons), « Bomber Harris » (chewing-gums stuck on canvases), « Text paintings » (paintings of aphorisms reproductions). This exhibition enables the discovery of series of sculptures of objects fabricated from graphite.

Adam McEwen aims upon attracting viewers' attention and provoking thoughts via diversion of objects and small details that are part of our daily life. He draws his inspiration from popular imagery, slogans or the star-system in order to denounce their latent hypocrisy. McEwen's work relies on morbid humor and deceptions, two key elements to access his work. The notion of accessibility does not imply that the artist tries to provide answers, but rather bring up questions through diversion or juxtaposition. By finding inspiration in various moments in history, from the second world war to present days, McEwen draws a link between capitalist development and destruction and is seen as a modern times illusionist. He looks upon history as a huge lie and plays with the perception of things and the audience's confidence towards the media.

Sculptures displayed in this exhibition are life-size replicas of various objects (neon lightings, lamp, mirror, fountain, credit cards, ...) sharing the same constituent: the graphite. Like diamond, graphite is carbon-based. Its specific properties, such as stability under very high temperatures, have made it essential to many industries, like iron and steel industry, solar electrical industry or missile manufacturing industry. Graphite dust is also used in pencil manufacture.

With his typical spirit, McEwen has followed the Minimalists regular model and formal strategy. Neon lightings are suspended from the ceiling, in rows, combining Walter De Maria's perfect geometry and Dan Flavin's ready-mades, while also evoking the harsh working conditions in a failing economy.

The exhibition is also punctuated with photographic enlargements of cigarettes presented in concrete or graphite frames. Besides the gigantic proportions, the brand names attract the attention: Doubt and Feelings.