

Collection Sandretto Re Rebaudengo: Maurizio Cattelan

Dark, funny and provocative, Italian artist **Maurizio Cattelan**'s sculptures provide a biting commentary on social values, politics and romantic ideas about art.

In *Bidibidobidiboo* (1996) a taxidermised squirrel inhabits a miniature version of the kitchen in which Cattelan grew up. The title jumbles the words sung by the fairy god mother in Disney's *Cinderella* adding to the poignancy of the suicide. *Lullaby* (1994), a large bag filled with rubble from the Contemporary Art Pavilion in Milan which was damaged in a Mafia-related bomb attack, was first exhibited in London some 20 years ago together with the neon of the artist's signature.

Italian politics and history are frequently referenced: the logo of the 1970s terrorist group Brigate Rosse morphs into an anarchic Christmas greeting, while a very different logo, that of an Italian cheese, is woven as a rug to expose the kitsch appeal of 'the beautiful country'. In contrast, Cattelan tackles real issues such as racism by manning an absurdly elongated table football with North African migrants playing a team of all-white northern Italian footballers.

Self-portraits abound in Cattelan's work. In *We are the Revolution* (2000) a boy-sized Cattelan dressed in the iconic felt suit of German artist-activist Joseph Beuys caricatures clichés of the artist as saviour.

The first in a year-long series of displays, this group of works represents one of the most substantial holdings of works by Maurizio Cattelan in a European collection. Thanks to working with Collection Sandretto Re Rebaudengo it is possible to show these publicly in the UK for the first time.

Curated by Achim Borchardt-Hume, Chief Curator, Whitechapel Gallery in collaboration with Francesco Bonami, Artistic Director, Collection and Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo.

See the fully illustrated catalogue including interview with collector Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, on sale in the Bookshop for a special exhibition price of £16.95.

Find out more about talks and events throughout the autumn. Pick up a leaflet or visit whitechapelgallery.org

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