

Fondazione Nicola Trussardi presents:

I LIKE THINGS

a project by MARTIN CREED

Palazzo dell'Arengario

Piazza Del Duomo, Milan

May 16 - June 18, 2006

**FONDAZIONE
NICOLA
TRUSSARDI**

From May 16 through June 18, 2006 the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi presents I Like Things, in the space of Palazzo dell'Arengario in Piazza del Duomo in Milan. A new exhibition by Turner Prize recipient Martin Creed, I Like Things brings together an extensive selection of recent works, public projects, and new productions specifically conceived for this exhibition.

Martin Creed's sculptures, installations and drawings come from the objects, words, and sounds of everyday life. Constantly searching for the basic nature of things, Martin Creed uses the simplest materials to create a world in which obsessions and fantasies radically alter reality and transform it into a catalogue of rigid rules and unexpected exceptions. Martin Creed's work, in fact, is at the same time spectacular and subtle, playful and severe, and at times almost cruel in its stark dryness.

Absurd laws and sudden mishaps, often amplified by the direct participation of the audience, regulate Martin Creed's imaginative universe. On the façade of the Palazzo dell'Arengario, a neon sign reading, Everything is Going to Be Alright, one of Martin Creed's iconic works, celebrates optimism, while making an ironic commentary on today's consumer-driven society. The work might also remind local visitors of the Italian commercial boom when Piazza Del Duomo was flooded by advertisements and neon lights projecting a mirage of a better future.

Martin Creed's light minimalism is simple and at the same time extreme: a series of plywood sheets, in the most standard size available on the market, are piled on top of each others as to compose a clumsy and yet somehow perfect geometric figure. In the first room of Palazzo dell'Arengario, transformed into a sort of decadent nightclub, Martin Creed also presents a piano interpreting an awkward mechanical ballet. Animated by awkward, uncontrollable urges, the piano abandons its graceful function becoming a possessed mechanism.

Even the air we breath and the space around us can be altered by the artist who appropriates the world around him with frantic enthusiasm: two wind machines recast the entrance to the exhibition while the sign Small Things works both as a light sculpture and as a poetic statement. Martin Creed's art, in fact, is based on an obsessive and hallucinated capacity to turn daily objects into mysterious monuments to a new objectivity.

In the main room of the building, the austere Sala delle Colonne, Martin Creed presents the piece with which he was awarded the 2001 Turner Prize from the Tate. The installation The Lights Going On and Off consists of nothing more than the lights switching maniacally on and off in the space every second. The work is at the same time an ascetic gesture of disarming simplicity and an ironic invitation to re-imagine a new destiny.

The human body is also a major source in Martin Creed's base materials. For his show in Milan, the British artist presents his first performance piece: men and women suddenly start running throughout the exhibition space, with no apparent reason. A metaphor of the capacity to build art out of nothing, or the Sisyphean struggle of life, the work offers an obscure metaphor of today's looming paranoia and existentialism. The same sense of insecurity resurfaces in the video at the end of the exhibition, which features a girl compulsively vomiting in front of the camera.

The Fondazione Nicola Trussardi continues its nomadic adventure in the city of Milan with I Like Things in Piazza del Duomo, in the Palazzo dell'Arengario, which opens its doors to visitors for the last time before closing for a major architectural restoration. Martin Creed's exhibition is therefore not only a chance to see the work of one of the most interesting artists working today, but also a great opportunity to learn more about the history of Milan and one of its most significant historical buildings, seen through the eyes of an irreverent and eccentric artist.

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HARD FACTS

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- Artist: Martin Creed
Title: I Like Things
- At: Palazzo dell'Arengario
Piazza Del Duomo
Milan - Italy
- Dates: May 16 – June 18, 2006
Open daily from 10 am to 8 pm
Free entrance
- Curated by: Massimiliano Gioni, Artistic Director
Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Milan
- Press Preview: May 16, 2006 – 11:30 am
Palazzo dell'Arengario, Piazza Del Duomo, Milan
- Opening: May 16, 2006 – 6:30 pm
Palazzo dell'Arengario, Piazza Del Duomo, Milan

For any further information and images please contact:

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SELECTED WRITINGS MARTIN CREED

Maybe working is trying, and work – the result of work – is everything that one tries to do. Trying... looking for excitement, or trying to handle it and use it to get out of the paté. Trying to do things; talking. Or maybe testing is a good way of putting it: testing things out. Testing things put by putting things about, all the time trying, hoping to be excited, wanting. Wanting is what makes me work: excitement, desire for something.

Work is a fight against loneliness, against low esteem, against depression, and against staying in bed. Sometimes my self esteem is so low that I cannot reach it even when I'm feeling down. I want to be on my own, but I don't want to be alone.

My work is 50% about what I make and 50% about what other people make of it.

I don't know what I want to say, but, to try to say something, I think I want to try to think. I want to try to see what I think. I think trying is a big part of it, I think thinking is a big part of it, and I think wanting is a big part of it, but saying it is difficult, and I find saying trying and nearly always wanting. I want what I want to say to go without saying.

I want all my works to be equal, big or small, a piece of music, a sculpture, an installation, or a painting. I want them to be treated the same – giving them all a number was one way of trying to do that.

I wouldn't want to pretend that I know what the work means. When I talk I am only saying what I think about something. I'm not saying what anyone else might think.

I started numbering my works because I wasn't happy with titles made of words. They meant too much and added too much extra, and I wanted a way of treating everything the same, big or small, whatever it was made of, whatever it was. Using numbers - just like catalogue numbers - seemed a good way of doing this. All numbers are equal. When I started numbering my works I went back and gave numbers to old ones. I got quite self-conscious about it - about which numbers I gave to which works - and found that I didn't want to have a 'Work No. 1'. It was too much. I couldn't live with it. WORK NO. 1, MY FIRST WORK! NO WAY! The point of the numbering was to try to give all works the same value - to treat everything the same - but the number one just was not the same. Not all numbers are equal. And so I tried to make a kind of fade-in. I started with 3, put 5 next, and went on up from there.

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SELECTED WRITINGS

Martin Creed delights in the mechanics of the everyday. His work is a majestic and sentimental statement of the obvious, and through it one re-encounters the world in all its banal glory.
Dale McFarland (in Frieze)

Martin Creed's practice can be distilled down to a series of exercises in awareness. As such, the more economically this intention can be brought about, the more satisfying it becomes. If it can be achieved by doing nothing at all, it attains some kind of perfection.
Godfrey Worsdale (Southampton City Art Gallery Catalogue)

Martin Creed's works are the opposite of autonomous works of art. The common material and the tactile quality reveal an attempt to incorporate everyday life into art, blurring the distinction between both. Creed's works only exist if they're experienced, responded to, or dealt with.
Pablo Lafuente (in Flash Art)

"Nothing" is an important word in the vocabulary of Martin Creed. As it does not have the power to separate things, it allows him to deal with "everything". The artist uses it in order to deconstruct the language. It allows things to be reached in a physical, rather than abstract sense, in their state of continuity with other things.
Pawel Polit (Ujadowski Castle Catalogue)

Martin Creed's provocative and witty works challenge our preconceptions and acceptance of the world around us. He does this not by adding anything to these familiar objects, texts and situations, but simply re-contextualising them as art and therefore asking us to consider them as we might not otherwise. Creed is simply offering us compelling and intriguing objects, interventions and statements, the rest is up to us.
Katherine Stout (Centre for Contemporary Art Warsaw Catalogue)

For an artist who repeatedly states that his work is about "nothing in particular", Martin Creed manages to say quite a lot. Much of his work provides a running commentary on the formal and administrative frameworks of the space in which he is exhibiting. And while Creed's interventions do indeed look like almost nothing, the effects they have on their respective environments are always alarmingly powerful.
Alex Coles (in Art in America)

Martin Creed's strength lies in his willingness to foist meaning outside the work so that the viewer and context make it art. Whatever its ironies, they embrace us. His work is autonomous yet passive, flirting with its capacities for meaning but unwilling a full commit.
Lisa Gabrielle Mark (in C: International Contemporary Art)

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MARTIN CREED

Martin Creed was born in 1968 in Wakefield, England. He studied at the Slade School of Fine Art, London. In 2001 he was the winner of the Turner Prize. He currently lives and works in London.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS AND PROJECTS

2006

Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Milan
Hauser & Wirth, Zürich

2005

Saint Peter's Church, Koeln
Gavin Brown's enterprise, New York

2004

Johnen Galerie, Berlin
Hauser & Wirth, London
Centre for Contemporary Art, Kitakyushu, Japan
Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris
Centre for Contemporary Art, Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw

2003

Kunsthalle Bern, Bern
The British School at Rome, Rome

2002

Alberto Peola Arte Contemporanea, Turin
The Wrong Gallery, New York

2001

Galerie Johnen & Schöttle, Koeln

2000

Camden Arts Centre, London
Saint Peter's Church, Koeln
Arte Continua, San Gimignano
Tate Britain, London
Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York
Southampton City Art Gallery, Southampton
Times Square / 42nd St, New York (commissioned by Public Art Fund)

1999

Mark Foxx Gallery, Los Angeles
Art Metropole, Toronto
Cabinet, London

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1998
Galerie Analix B & L Polla, Geneva

1997
Victoria Miro Gallery, London

1995
Camden Arts Centre, London

SELLECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2006
'Of Mice and Men', 4th Berlin Biennale, Berlin
'Big Bang: Destruction and Creation in 20th Century Art', Centre Pompidou, Paris

2005
'Light Art from Artificial Light', Zentrum Für Kunst und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe
'Ambiance — Des Deux Côtes du Rhin', K20 Kunstsammlung, Düsseldorf
'General Ideas — Rethinking Conceptual Art 1987-2005', CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco
'Expérience de la Durée', Biennale d'Art Contemporain, Lyon
'Reimagine: Oeuvres du Fonds National d'Art Contemporain', Musée d'Art Contemporain, Lyon
'Monuments for the U.S.A.', CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco

2004
'None of the Above', Swiss Institute, New York
'Artist's Favourites: Act II', ICA, London
'Artist's Favourites: Act I', ICA, London
'Strategies of Desire', Kunsthau Basseland, Basel
'Arte & Architettura, 1900-2000', Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Villo Croce, Genova
'State of Play', Serpentine Gallery, London
'Live', Palais de Tokyo, Paris
'Café in Mito', Art Tower Mito, Mito
'Optimo: Manifestations of Optimism in Contemporary Art', Ballroom Marfa, Texas

2003
'Adorno', Kunstverein, Frankfurt
'Soundsystem', Kunstverein, Salzburg
'Shine', Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam

2002
'To Actuality', curated by Maia Damianovic, AR/GE Kunst Galerie Museum, Bozen
'Tempo', The Museum of Modern Art, New York

2001
'Turner Prize 2001', Tate Britain, London
'Nothing in the Main Hall', Rooseum Center for Contemporary Art, Malmö
'Nothing', CAC Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius
'Works on Paper', Victoria Miro Gallery, London
'Rooseum Provisorium', Rooseum Center for Contemporary Art, Malmö
'Space-Jack!', Yokohama Museum, Yokohama, Japan
'White Light/White Noise', Mexico City
'Art/Music: Rock, Pop, Techno', Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia
'Under Pressure', Museum of Contemporary Art, Tucson, and Swiss Institute, New York

2000
'Protest And Survive', Whitechapel Art Gallery, London
'A casa di...', Fondazione Pistoletto, Biella
'Intelligence: New British Art 2000', Tate Britain, London

1999
'54 x 54 x 54', Museum of Contemporary Art, London
'nerve', ICA, London

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1998

'every day', 11th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney

'Speed', Whitechapel Art Gallery, London

'Crossings: Kunst Zum Hören und Sehen', Kunsthalle Wien, Wien

1997

'Lovecraft', CCA, Glasgow

'Thoughts', City Racing, London

1996

'Life/Live', Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris

'Ace!', Arts Council Collection, Hayward Gallery, London

'try', Royal College of Art, London

1995

'Fuori Fase', Viafarini, Milan

1994

'Domestic Violence', Gio' Marconi, Milan

1993

'Wonderful Life', Lisson Gallery, London

1992

'Inside a Microcosm', Laure Genillard

'Outta Here', Transmission Gallery, Glasgow. With Douglas Gordon

1991

Laure Genillard Gallery, London

Angel Row Gallery Touring Show, Nottingham

1989

The Black Bull, London

SELECTED RECORDINGS

'I don't know what I want', Work No. 320, CD, 1 song, Serpentine Gallery, London, 2004

'I Can't Move', CD, 7 songs, Art Metropole, Toronto, 1999

'EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE ALRIGHT', CD, 3 songs (Work No. 207, 208, 209), The Pier Trust, London, 1999

'nothing', (with the band Owada), Piano 508, 27 songs, 1997

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310 WORDS FOR MARTIN CREED

A PROJECT BY MATTHEW HIGGS

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Absurd. Accessible. Accommodating. Accumulative. Acoustic. Acquiescent. Acute. Adaptable. Adequate. Adorable. Adroit. Aesthetic. Alchemic. Alright. Altruistic. Amateurish. Ambient. Ambivalent. Amenable. Amusing. Anal. Angular. Anticlimactic. Anxious. Apolitical. Apologetic. Appreciative. Approachable. Approximate. Archetypal. Articulate. Autonomous. Average. Awkward.

Balloon. Banal. Barefaced. Bashful. Basic. Beautiful. Benign. Blithe. Boring. Brusque. Burlesque.

Calculated. Camp. Candid. Careful. Casual. Catalytic. Categorical. Cathartic. Cautious. Cerebral. Characteristic. Charming. Circuitous. Circumstantial. Clean. Clichéd. Coercive. Colloquial. Commensurate. Common. Communicative. Compatible. Complex. Comprehensible. Compulsive. Conceptual. Conciliatory. Conformist. Congenial. Connective. Conscientious. Contagious. Contextual. Contradictory. Contrary. Contrite. Convivial. Cool. Crafty. Creedal. Critical. Cryptic. Cumulative. Curious.

Dandyish. Debonair. Democratic. Descriptive. Diacritical. Dialectic. Diffident. Dilettantish. Diminutive. Discreet. Documentary. Doleful. Domestic. Durational. Dysfunctional.

Earnest. Earthly. Easy. Ebullient. Eccentric. Echoic. Eclectic. Economic. Effortless. Egalitarian. Elemental. Emotional. Empathetic. Endearing. Entertaining. Episodic. Equivocal. Esoteric.

Fastidious. Fecund. Felicitous. Finicky. Forlorn. Formal. Friendly. Functional. Fundamental. Funny.

Generous. Gingerly.

Habitual. Heartfelt. Homogenous. Honest. Hopeful. Humane. Humble. Humdrum. Humorous. Hypothetical.

Iconoclastic. Idealistic. Idiomatic. Imitative. Immediate. Impecunious. Implicit. Impulsive. Inchoate. Incidental. Inclusive. Incongruous. Ingenious. Innocent. Inquisitive. Instinctive. Instructional. Insubstantial. Intentional. Interactive. Intimate. Introverted. Irreverent. Itinerate.

Jovial. Judicious.

Knowing.

Laborious. Laconic. Latent. Lateral. Lean. Less. Liberal. Liberating. Life-sized. Light. Liminal. Literal. Local. Logical. Loose. Lowly. Lucid. Lugubrious. Luminary.

Macro. Makeshift. Mannered. Marginal. Materialistic. Matter of fact. Maverick. Meditative. Melancholic. Melodic. Methodological. Micro. Middling. Mimetic. Minimal. Mischievous. Mnemonic. Moderate. Momentary. Multiple.

Neurotic. Nominal. Nondescript. No-nonsense. Normal. Nothing. Notional. Numerical. Objective. Oblique. Obsessive. Obstinate. Odd. Off-key. Ongoing. Open-ended. Opportunistic. Orderly. Ordinary. Organic. Orthodox.

Paradoxical. Parasitic. Parenthetical. Particular. Pathetic. Pedantic. Persistent. Pessimistic. Playful. Populist. Positive. Pragmatic. Primary.

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Quantitative.

Rational. Realistic. Reasonable. Recycled. Reductive. Reflexive. Regular. Repetitious. Representative. Repressed. Reserved. Rigorous. Romantic. Routine.

Sanguine. Satiric. Schematic. Seamless. Sedate. Seductive. Self-conscious. Self-deprecating. Self-effacing. Self-explanatory. Self-referential. Semantic. Seminal. Sensory. Sentimental. Sequential. Serial. Simple. Social. Something. Speculative. Standard. Stereotypical. Stoic. Structural. Subjective. Superfluous. Systematic.

Temporary. Tenacious. Theatrical. Timeless. Tolerant. Traditional. Transient. True. Typical.

Unadorned. Unaffected. Uncertain. Uncontrived. Uniform. Universal. Unlimited. Uplifting.

Variable.

Workaday.

Yielding.

Zealous.

Afterword

Whilst working on this project, I happened upon the word 'creed' in the Oxford Concise English Dictionary. It was defined thus:

creed/kri:d/n. a set of principles or opinions, esp. as a philosophy of life (his creed is moderation in everything).

Moderation is everything: that's Martin Creed's philosophy of life and the operating principle behind his art. Never can an artist have been so appositely named.