
**STEPHEN PRINA**

Stephen Prina is not a formalist, though he may sound like one: “My intention is not the meaning of the work. The work only has meaning when it enters the social sphere and meets its audience. That’s where meaning is produced, not in the studio.” His work is characterized by layer upon layer of appropriation and references to other artworks, music, and films. One of his main projects, “Exquisite Corpse: The Complete Paintings of Manet,” is an ongoing series he started in 1988, for which he recreates every one of Édouard Manet’s 556 paintings, as recorded by the French artist’s catalogue raisonné using only the actual size and title of the original Manet works as starting points. Without discarding their original meaning, Prina combines different materials, signs and structures, quotations and references, that allow the potentiality of significance to come to the fore, dismantling the alleged autonomy of the original. Through the complementary components that make up the multi-layered narratives and histones found in his work, Prina establishes a dialogue with the viewer, where s/he functions as a container of possibilities, while the work exists as not only a storehouse of past objects, but also as a structure that underlies our interpretation of the world. Prina’s work is currently on view at Secession, Vienna, until 21 August. Judith Vrancken

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