



L. Thomas – 9 Perspectives, 1972

Low Thomas – 9 OBJECTS + 5 BOOKSPINES

MiCamera presents the first Italian exhibition of the work by the Californian artist Lew Thomas done during the 1970s. The prints on exhibit capture some of the amazing results that Lew Thomas was able to achieve during this fascinating period of his artistic career. As a representative of 'Conceptual Art', his art expresses a deep reflection on time, language and the artistic process itself. The definition of "Conceptual Art", first used in 1967 by Sol LeWitt, in his "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art", is: to indicate an art in which "the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work. When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art".

Viewed in this context "Art" needs to be considered as 'language', a dialogue which yields knowledge that emerges through the thought process, itself, and not through the image. The work of art becomes the visual *means* that conveys the artistic *act of the mind*. The exhibit includes prints belonging to two distinct and different bodies of work: (1) 'Objects', which present daily objects or perspectives composed by series of prints and (2) 'Bookspines', in which each print is dedicated to the spine of a book. This exhibition is the first in a series of exhibits that will be aimed at rediscovering the artistic production of the '70s.

Biography:

Lewis C. Thomas was born in San Francisco in 1932. He studied at the University of San Francisco and later took part in the development of Conceptual Art theories, stating its basic implications in photography: in 1971 he produced *Black and White*, a work that lays the basis for a complex research process. In 1974 he realized a refined photographic essay on Rodin's *Thinker*. In the same year he planned and organized *8 x 10*, an exhibition event that took place simultaneously in different locations, assuming the characteristics of a communication event. In 1975 the National Endowment for the Arts assigned him the first of many grants to support his artistic activity and he founded together with Donna-Lee Phillips *NFS Press* (Not For Sale Press), that published a series of extremely important catalogues: *Photography and Language* (1976-1979), *Eros and Photography* (1977), *Structural(ism) and Photography* (1978) and *Still Photography: The Problematic Model* (1981). In 1976 Carl Loeffler invited him to LaMamelle, a San

Francisco contemporary arts center, to co-curate the project *Photography and Language* that would lead both to a national exhibition and to a publication. In 1977 he participated in a series of informal meetings between Bay Area artists that took place in Richard Misrach's Emeryville studio. The following year, John Szarkowski invited him to participate to the renown exhibition *Mirrors and Windows*, that was held in various American museums starting from the MoMA in New York. In 1980 he held a one-person exhibition at the Fraenkel Gallery in San Francisco featuring the series Bookspines that was then acquired by the Chase Manhattan Bank in New York. Between 1989 and 1995 he was the "former visual arts curator" at the Contemporary Arts Center in New Orleans. He currently lives and works in San Francisco.

Catalogue edited by MiCamera
Critical essay by Francesco Zanot



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The exhibition can be visited from 7 March to April 29, 2007
Opening: Tuesday 6 March at 6.30 pm

MiCamera – photography and lens-based arts
Via Medardo Rosso, 19 | 20159 Milano
ph/fax: +39.02.4548 1569
www.micamera.com | info@micamera.com

open Wednesday to Saturday 10 am – 1pm and 4pm –7pm