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CARL PLACKMAN

OBSCURE TERRITORIES

9th September - 17th October 2015



BACHELOR OF ARTS 1977, MIXED MEDIA

Godfather of British conceptual sculpture Carl Plackman's artistic *oeuvre* encompassed sculpture, drawings, installation and occasionally photographs. One of the most innovative sculptors of his day, creating complex works he confronted and questioned ideas of what sculpture could be. As a generous and influential teacher many of his students have since become major names in British contemporary art including Tony Cragg, Damien Hirst, Liam Gillick and Alison Wilding.

Frequently given the accolade of an 'artist's artist', this first solo exhibition of Carl Plackman's work at Pangolin London will re-emphasise his position in the canon of sculptural history and underline his importance to the development of British contemporary art.

Born in Huddersfield in 1943, Plackman grew up in the West Country before completing a Masters of Art in 1970 at the Royal College of Art under the tutelage of Bryan Kneale and Bernard Meadows. It was an unplanned gap year course at The West of England College of Art in Bristol that set him on his artistic path, his tutors at the time included

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Ralph Brown and he and his fellow students including John Maine, Nigel Hall and Richard Long were taught academic artistic practices. As a result his early work from this period was figurative and organic, with themes drawn from Greek sculpture. However, it was an architectural apprenticeship prior to his academic studies that probably had the most impact on his artistic output both technically and conceptually, affecting his awareness of space, social and cultural control and his relationship with drawing.

In many cases Plackman's work is an attempt to examine how people communicate with each other and how objects can often obstruct that communication. His day to day activities impacted upon his work, constantly taking inspiration from his everyday life and whilst his sculpture appears to use real objects Plackman's work is not that of the found-object, more often these objects have been completely remade in a different material. His sculpture challenged people to think about the world they moved in, their space, to see the shapes and spatial relationships around them.

Carl Plackman rarely discussed his work in depth or detail, a private person he felt that it undermined his art and would detract from the viewer's interpretation and experience of it. This exhibition takes a long overdue look at the artist's last three decades of groundbreaking installations and works on paper, including 'Bachelor of the Arts' which has only recently come to light, and provides the viewer with the opportunity to experience his influence for themselves.

"Obscurity seems part of the 'nature of objects'".

CARL PLACKMAN

Solo shows of Carl Plackman have been held at the Arnolfini, Bristol; Huddersfield Art Gallery; Stanley Picker Gallery, Kingston Upon Thames; Hales Gallery, London; Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff and Chisenhale Gallery, London. His work can be found in many national and international public collections including the Tate Collection, The Henry Moore Institute, Victoria and Albert Museum, British Museum, National Museum of Wales, Art Gallery of New South Wales, British Council and the Arts Council Collection who have just acquired two of Plackman's works, 'Orpheus' and 'Without Belief'.

"Like in Carl's work, the best answers are always questions and as long as we are asking questions, we are living more fully and finding answers."

DAMIEN HIRST

Gallery open Monday - Saturday 10am - 6pm

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