

Press release

*Vito Acconci*

*Now and Then*

Curated by Kenny Schachter

15 June – 26 July 2014

Opening: Saturday, June 14, 5pm – 8 pm

Opening hours during Art Basel:

Saturday/Sunday, June 14/15 and 21/22, 11am – 5pm

Monday – Friday, June 16 – 20, 11am – 6pm

Regular opening hours:

Wednesday to Friday 1am – 6pm

Saturday 11am – 5pm

and by prior arrangement

Wouldn't it be ideal if we could revisit and rewrite our past? The earliest works on view in this exhibition *Vito Acconci Now and Then* date from 1969-71 covering some of Acconci's most vital and still pertinent contributions to performance and conceptual art. The archival documentation contains period photographs and text both hand and typewritten, accompanied by subsequently drafted thoughts.

In red ink, in Acconci's trademark scrawl that also happens to be the title of one of the most known works on view, we are provided with an extraordinary glimpse into how the artist has come to perceive his earlier works at a time his studio has radically shifted to a more open ended group architecture and design practice.

Among the most fascinating contributions to the past work of Acconci, the artist himself has spent countless hours revisiting these pieces and logging his reactions some 45 years after the fact and physically installing them directly onto the vintage works. Whether it's mundane recollections of the formal attributes of the layouts, like pointing out missing pages of text and photographs, to searching back to the impetus that gave rise to the pieces in the first instance, it's a rare and rarefied peek into the mindset of one of the most fascinating thinkers of our time.

In works such as *Trademarks*, where the artist marked himself with himself by biting into his own flesh, leaving violent remnants of the intervention, we witness a "body" of work so far ahead of its time to be still impactful and influential nearly half a century later, as seen in artists as diverse as Marina Abramović to Ryan Trecartin.

In *Untitled Piece for Pier 17*, Acconci invited gallery goers to meet him at night on a deserted New York City pier, neither a pleasant nor safe place at the time, and in return for doing so, he'd reveal a personal confession that he had never disclosed before. In the new old works before us, Acconci has again granted all access to the far reaches of his innermost thoughts.

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In this exhibit, Acconci has provided us with invaluable philosophically illustrative insights into his process then and now, depicting how such information has been filtered since. Vito's added words reflect the notion of memory and its built in inadequacies. It's a unique and unrivaled opportunity to observe a self-reflective, artistic self-analysis, where we are entitled to voyeuristically watch Acconci think out loud.

**Vito Acconci (\*1940 in New York) lives and works in New York. He studied literature and poetry. After working as a poet and teaching, he moved to the visual arts in the late 1960s and worked with photography, text, film, video, sound and performance. In 1988, he founded Acconci Studio, where he develops projects in architecture, furniture and urban spaces. Vito Acconci's work was exhibited at MOMA in New York, Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, and he participated at the Venice Biennale as well as Documenta 5, 6 and 7 in Kassel.**

**For more than 20 years, Kenny Schachter (\*1961 in New York) has been working as a curator, artist, artdealer and lecturer (New York University; Royal College of Art). He studied philosophy, political science and law. In 1991, he founded Rove, a nomadic gallery and in 2001 he established the gallery conTEMPorary, located first in New York and since 2004 in London. He curated *Nothing But Time: Paul Thek Revisited 1964-187* at Pace Gallery, London, in 2013 and *Polke/Richter, Richter/Polke* at Christie's Mayfair, London, in 2014.**