

ROBILANT+VOENA

PRESS RELEASE, ST. MORITZ

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Robilant+Voena is pleased to present a solo exhibition of works by **Alighiero Boetti** (1940 - 1994), one of the most influential Italian artists of the twentieth century.

The exhibition features important hallmarks of Boetti's intellectually diverse practice in a succinct and eloquent way, including his engagement with ready-made signs, words and language, collaborative exchange and his constant underlying interest in methods of ordering and disordering. The show also illustrates his interest in exploring material diversity by bringing together works on paper and canvas with small and large-scale embroideries.

SUMMER
EXHIBITION

S t. Moritz



Born in Turin in 1940, Boetti started out as an Arte Povera artist using mundane materials bought from local shops and arranged in simple configurations. In the late 1960s, however, he moved towards a more conceptual way of working that involved language, writing and the notion of the artist as simultaneously being a shaman and a showman. Boetti referred to artists as “i vedenti” (the sighted) and called this process of focusing attention on mundane things “bringing the world into the world.” This idea, fundamental to his practice, became a key phrase that has been referred to in numerous publications and exhibitions such as the 1998 show at Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt, Germany; *Alighiero e Boetti: Mettere al mondo il mondo*. From 1972 onwards he lived and worked in Rome, where he died in 1994.

Our St. Moritz exhibition includes a large number of Boetti’s multi-coloured square embroideries and a work from his series of world maps – testaments to his important and enduring relationship with Afghanistan, a country fittingly known as an ancient crossroads of cultural interchange. He made his first journey there in 1971 and opened a small hotel in Kabul that same year, which he used as a base to plan and execute his most famous works. Primary among these are the *Mappe* whose embroidered surfaces were inspired by the outstanding craftsmanship Boetti encountered in the markets and interiors of Kabul. These ambitious, laborious projects saw him enlist the skills of numerous Afghan women for the realization of his work. In doing so, he established a form of relational aesthetics whereby he could explore the role of the artist as conceiver but not the ultimate creator, and revel in the unexpected results proffered by chance, error or the peculiarities of the craftsperson. The collaboration with Afghan artisans continued until his death.

Alighiero Boetti is represented in numerous important public collections worldwide. Notable solo exhibitions have taken place at the Centre National d’Art Contemporain de Grenoble, Grenoble; Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles; and the P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York. In 2012 the Tate Modern, London, held a major retrospective that subsequently travelled to the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York. His art was shown at six editions of the Venice Biennale where his personal exhibition room in the 1990 edition was awarded a special prize, and a posthumous homage show was presented in the 2001 edition.

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BELOW Detail of *Cinque x Cinque Venticinque*, 1989
Signed on the reverse
Embroidery
23 x 22 cm. (9 1/8 x 8 5/8 in.)

PREVIOUS PAGE *Aerei*, 1989
ink and spray paint on paper laid down on canvas
in three parts, each: 40 1/2 x 25 7/8in. (103 x 65.8cm.)
overall: 40 1/2 x 77 3/4in. (103 x 197.4cm.)

