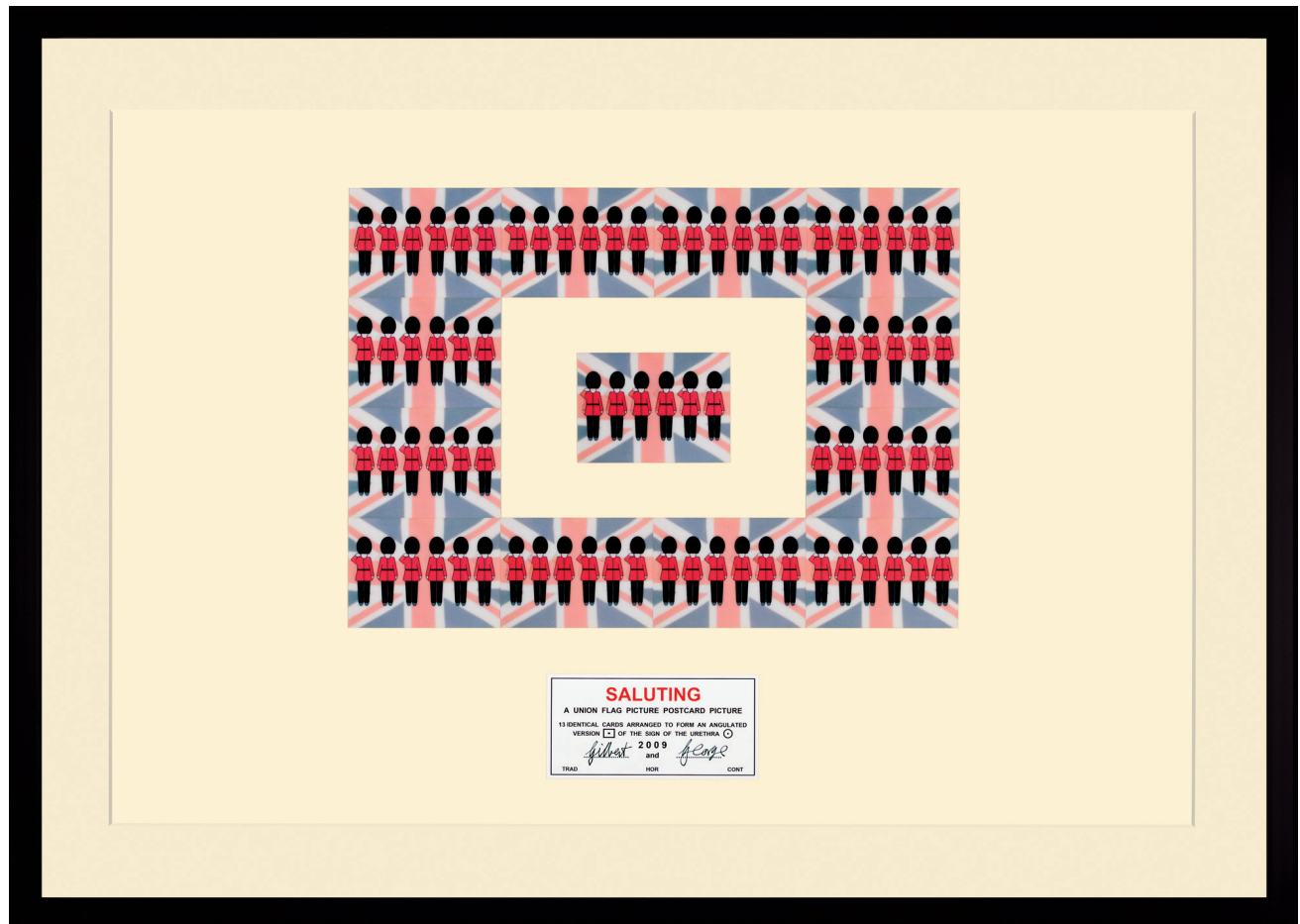


Ivorypress Art + Books presents

Gilbert & George

The Urethra Postcard Art



Gilbert & George | *Saluting*, 2009

Exhibition: From 14 April to 14 May 2011

Venue: Ivorypress Art + Books Space I C/ Comandante Zorita 48 (Madrid)

Opening: 14 April 2011 19.30 h

Gilbert & George are exhibiting their most recent work from *The Urethra Postcard Pictures* project at Ivorypress Art + Books Space I from April 14 to May 14 2011. In 2009, nearly four decades after their first exhibition of postcard art and almost twenty years since last using this format, Gilbert & George have returned to postcards as a support to create a group of 564 new pieces, called *The Urethra Postcard Pictures*. This is the single largest group of art works made by Gilbert & George so far and, in turn, comprises seven individual groups of new postcard pictures. Ivorypress will showcase 76 of these works in an exhibition designed especially by the artists themselves.

The art of Gilbert & George has always described, with utmost clarity, poignancy and intensity, the unifying experiences of being alive in the modern world. Their works address subjects that are seldom considered within the language and focus of contemporary art and culture: the lowly, discarded, hidden, quotidian, awkward, confrontational, unfashionable, volatile, isolated or left un-regarded.

The Urethra Postcard Pictures reveal Gilbert & George at their most intent and artistically all seeing. These new pieces are united, compositionally, by their elements comprising “an angulated version of the sign of urethra”. This shape –a continuous rectangle of cards, with a single card in its central space– mimics the sexual symbol used by the one time theosophist C. W. Leadbetter (1853-1934) to accompany his signature. In this way, the project on exhibit at Ivorypress is impregnated with a certain libertarianism, while also maintaining intact the confrontational spirit so characteristic of the work of Gilbert & George.

The Urethra Postcard Pictures advance their long-standing engagement with commercially manufactured images and texts –including in this case, picture postcards, telephone box cards and flyers– with which Gilbert & George describe a modern urban world and a sexual society that is covert or marginalised within that world.

This group of pictures treats prostitution and sexually transmitted disease, for instance, using the same sense of aesthetic and compositional language as they apply to questions such as nationhood and civic identity. *The Urethra Postcard Pictures* reaffirm themes that Gilbert & George have addressed throughout their art, and most recently in such groups as *The New Horny Pictures* and *The Jack Freak Pictures*.

In their sheer visual intensity, the extremism of their language, and above all the forceful unity of their composition, *The Urethra Postcard Pictures* both extend the postcard art of Gilbert & George as a specific form, and comprise one of the most powerful, mesmeric and intensely conceived and created groups of art works that the artists have made to date.

Gilbert (San Martin de Tor, Dolomites, Italy, 1943) and George (Devon, United Kingdom, 1942) live and work in London. Together they have participated in many important group and solo exhibitions including the largest retrospective of any artist to be staged at Tate Modern in London, in 2007. The exhibition went on to tour to Haus der Kunst, Munich (2007), Castello di Rivoli, Turin (2007), Milwaukee Art Museum (2008) and Brooklyn Museum, New York (2008–09).

They have had many other extensive solo exhibitions, including Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (1971-1972); National Gallery, Beijing (1993); Shanghai Art Museum (1993); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1995-1996); Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (1998); Serpentine Gallery, London (2002); Kunsthaus, Bregenz (2002); Kestnargesellschaft, Hannover (2004-2005); CAC Malaga (2010); Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb (2010) and Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels (2010). They won the Turner Prize in 1984 and represented the United Kingdom at the Venice Biennale in 2005.

To tie in with the exhibition, which already went on show at the White Cube gallery in London, Prestel has published *The Complete Postcard Art of Gilbert & George*, a new double volume publication reproducing the entire postcard art works created by Gilbert & George, with an essay by Michael Bracewell, which will be available at Ivorypress Art + Books bookshop.

For further information and interview requests:

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