

# Goran Trbuljak

## 45 Years of Non-Painting

Opening  
Saturday 12 February 2022  
3pm – 8pm  
12 February – 2 April 2022

Press conference  
Friday 11/02, 11am  
at P420,  
Via Azzo Gardino 9, Bologna

P420 is pleased to present *45 Years of Non-Painting*, the second solo exhibition in the gallery by the Croatian artist Goran Trbuljak (Varaždin, 1948, lives and works in Zagreb), after the first show in 2014.

*45 Years of Non-Painting* is a show about painting, or perhaps it would be preferable to say painting seen through the artist's countless attempts to *not* paint over the years. With constant self-deprecating wit, since the late 1960s Goran Trbuljak has played the role of a conceptual artist and painter, outside the main currents of the western art world. Starting in the 1980s, in the context of an art scene going through profound changes, Trbuljak has embodied the figure of the artist in crisis, skeptical, conscious, disillusioned, "an artist more for what he does not do than for what he does."

Trbuljak has repeatedly adopted procedures of painting throughout his practice which question his own position as an artist, as well as art in the context and perception of contemporary society. His work examines the mechanisms by which something is accepted as art and confronts the autonomy of the museum-gallery system. With Trbuljak's reductionist painting exercises he explores the concrete processes of creation that make a work of art. His methods, without any emotions, illusions, symbolism, narration or literature, examine the very essence of the painting and reduce art exclusively to its basic functions. In his experimentation with "non-painting" Trbuljak challenges the discipline of painting as the ultimate expression of art. For the artist, a simple gesture can function as a contribution to an artistic or social system, an action which is compounded with traces of self-effacing humor.

The exhibition outlines the artist's career through an ample selection of works on canvas, ranging from the historic, well-known *Sunday Paintings* (1974) to the *Hand-Held Paintings*, the *Painted from side* works and *Jazz Brush Paintings*, just to cite some examples, all the way to the more recent *Easel Paintings* (2016-18) or *Sketches for Sculpture* (2019). In these later works Trbuljak imitates the formalized still life scenes typically found throughout the canon of art history, creating sculptural compositions that feature traditional tools of painting.

The show also includes the *Sentences*, important works on paper made by the artist "sometime in 1971 until the early 1980s." Produced on A4 paper with a typewriter, the few, impersonal words concentrated in the lower part of the page were addressed to ordinary people, visitors to exhibitions, and mainly referred to art and its perception. The selection of *Sentences* inserted in the exhibition, such as "This text is my painting," focuses on the theme of painting, in tune with the other works on view.

For the occasion of the exhibition, the artist's book *From Self Ironic to Self Sardonic (45 years of not painting)* will be published in a limited edition of 100 copies.

Trbuljak's most recent solo exhibitions were held at Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Rijeka (2019); Apoteka, Ljubljana (2020); Villa delle Rose, Bologna (2019); Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva (2018); Muzej-Museo Lapidarium, Novigrad (2016); and P420, Bologna (2014) amongst others.

Trbuljak has been included in a number of group exhibitions at internationally renowned institutions, such as Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana (2017); FM Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea, Milano (2016); Museum of Modern Art – MoMA, New York (2015); Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2015); Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro – MAM Rio (2014); Moderna Galerija, Ljubljana (2013); and Centre Pompidou, Paris (2010). Additionally, he represented Croatia at the 51<sup>st</sup> (2005) and 47<sup>th</sup> (1995) Biennale di Venezia.

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