

ARTFORUM

Jorge Macchi

MUSEO DE ARTE LATINOAMERICANO DE BUENOS AIRES (MALBA)

Avenida Figueroa Alcorta 3415

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“Perspective” is Jorge Macchi’s most expansive show to date in his hometown of Buenos Aires. A survey of more than fifty works from the past twenty years—including paintings, collages, videos, and installations—the exhibition is anchored by the tension between Macchi’s broad range of mediums and his ascetic restraint.

Many of the artist’s works explore the basic geometric construction of an action or scene, such as the circumference sketched out by the blades of a ceiling fan or the lines traced by speeding cars.

These forms are the starting points for carefully delimited delirium, as in the installation *Still Song*, 2013, which seems to have been created by rays of light reflecting off a disco ball suspended in the middle of the room. All the surfaces in sight are riddled with what look like large-caliber bullet holes. Did the light wreak havoc and then retreat? The ball has come to a halt, and there’s no music—the party’s really, really over. In an interview with the artist, the exhibition’s curator, Agustín Pérez Rubio, compares *Still Song* to Lucio Fontana and the prom scene in *Carrie* (1976)—a perfect pair, considering Macchi’s ability to join the sublime with the macabre and ally elementary gestural marks with slapstick. As art historian Inés Katzenstein puts it in the accompanying catalogue, Macchi produces “errors that work like jokes, but also like triggers of something sinister.” Death looms on the horizon here: Take *Monoblock*, 2003, for instance, a collage of obituary pages with the text removed, or *Doppelgänger*, 2005, large Rorschach-like patterns made using gruesome crime reports. Macchi injects violence and deadpan humor into the simplest of forms. He’s a ludic artist, but in many works, like *Still Song*, there’s an uncanny feeling that he’s brought us to the end of the line.



Jorge Macchi, *Still Song*, 2005 mirror ball, dry wall, wood, light tubes, 19 x 26 x 10'.

— Patrick Greaney