

Press Release for the exhibition entitled 'The Demarco Archive 1947 - 2019: inspired by the Anglo-Italo cultural dialogue at the heart of the Demarco Archive' dedicated to the memory of John O. R. Martin life-long patron of the Demarco Archive

The exhibition and related symposium in seven parts will focus on the history of the **Anglo-Italo cultural dialogue**. This dialogue will emphasize the importance of the interface between the Venice Biennale and the Edinburgh International Festival and how there has been a fruitful interchange bringing Italian artists to the Edinburgh Festival and British artists to the Venice Biennale.

The basic nature of the exhibition will be made manifest in the Demarco Archive's '**Event Photography**' now designated as a new genre of contemporary art by the **Museum Kunst Palast in Dusseldorf**. These '**Event Photographs**' as an art form are inspired by British artists in fruitful dialogue with their contemporaries in Europe on both sides of the Iron Curtain during the Cold War with a particular emphasis on the Anglo-Romanian cultural dialogue expressed in the 1971 Official Edinburgh Festival exhibition entitled '**Romanian Art Today**'.

This exhibition was made possible in collaboration with **Radu Varia**, the Romanian art historian and founder of the **Constantin Brancusi Foundation**. It followed naturally the 1970 Official Edinburgh Festival exhibition from Dusseldorf with the palindromic title **>>Strategy: get arts<<**. It must be said that the combination of this historic West German exhibition together with the Romanian exhibition made possible the Demarco Gallery's Official Festival programmes which followed in consecutive years representing the **Polish Avant-garde in 1972**, the **French, Austrian and Yugoslav Avant-garde of 1973** and the '**Edinburgh Arts**' Official Festival exhibitions which introduced the spirit of Black Mountain College as an experimental 'university of the arts' to the Edinburgh Festival.

All of these exhibitions involved artists from West Germany, Romania, Poland, France, Austria and the former Yugoslavia representing museums and galleries, particularly the **Lodz Museum Sztuki**, the **Galerija Grada Zagreb**, Tadeusz Kantor's **Cricoteka** and the **Gallery of Contemporary Art** in Cracow, as well as the **Depot Historical Museum** in Wroclaw, the **Foksal Gallery** in Warsaw, the **National Museum of Lithuania** in Kaunas, the **National Gallery** in Malta, the **Foundation Maeght** in St. Paul de Vence, the **National Gallery of Hungary** in Budapest, the **Brukenthal National Museum of Romanian Art** in Sibiu, the **Irish Museum of Modern Art** in Dublin, the **Ulster Museum** in Belfast, the **Guggenheim Museum** in Bilbao and the **Dusseldorf Kunsthalle**.

Up to date aspects of the Demarco Archive are represented in an exhibition of bronze sculptures by **John Hale** from the collection of **Giuseppe Meroni** and an exhibition of drawings by the Polish artist **Sonia Rolak** domiciled in Venice; she is the personification of the importance of the Anglo-Polish cultural dialogue.

I cannot imagine a more important manifestation of the Anglo-Italo cultural dialogue than that which I associate with the genius of **Ian Hamilton Finlay**, particularly as expressed by his 'concrete poetry', most importantly, in the sculptural installations in **Little Sparta in Scotland** and in **Giuliano Gori's Fattoria di Celle in Italy**. There is also the video installation of **'The New World'** by **Alan Smith**, and new paintings on the theme of **Acrobats and Clowns** by **Andrew Marr**. The exhibition programme will also be enhanced, and linked to the symposium in seven parts, including **Stephen Partridge's** video art focused on the concept of **'Rewind'** in collaboration with **Paolo Cardazzo**. There will be a film defining the historic collaboration between **Joseph Beuys** and **Robert McDowell** which introduced Joseph Beuys to Dublin and Cork in Eire and Belfast and Derry in Northern Ireland.

The Demarco Archive exhibition in Venice actually began in a smaller version at the Burgh Hall Art Gallery in Dunoon defining the sea-girt world renowned for bright shining light reflected on the waters of the River Clyde reminiscent of the light falling on the waters of the Venice Lagoon. The exhibition was in homage to **Joseph Beuys** and **Gunther Uecker** as German artists who delighted in the Celtic world of Scotland's West Highlands and Islands.

Among those contributing to the symposium will be:

Dr. Mario Po - Director of La Scuola Grande di San Marco

Andrew Marr - Painter and Historian

Giuseppe Meroni - Art patron of the life and work of John Hale

Dr. Radu Varia HRSA - Art Historian and honorary Royal Scottish Academician

Sonia Rolak - Polish artist - living and working in Venice

Professor Stephen Partridge - Video artist Dundee University

Professor Elaine Shemilt - Video artist, Dundee University

Robert McDowell - Artist/Economist - former assistant to Joseph Beuys, Founder of Summerhall Art Centre in Edinburgh

Dr Sam Smith - Historian representing Alan Smith, the Scottish artist inspired by Giandomenico Tiepolo's 'Il Nuovo Mondo' [1791]

Professor Margaret Rose - Professor of Theatre Studies, Milan University and Art Historian

Sheila Colvin - Director of the Aldeburgh Festival and Deputy Director of the Edinburgh International Festival

Gabriella Cardazzo - Artist, Art Patron and Director of 'Artspace'

Michael Lloyd - Film-maker, former BBC Journalist

Professor Deidre Mackenna - Former Director of Stills Gallery

Alberta Toninato - Director of 'Arlecchino Torn in Three', graduate of the University of Venice

Caroline Wiseman - Founder and Director of the Aldeburgh Outlook Tower Visual Arts Festival

Dr Anthony Schrag - Artist, Director of Performance Art Studies, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh