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Pruitt's

Flea

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Venice

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# Rob Pruitt's Flea Market in Venice

Official Opening: May 5th, 2015, 12pm

Venice, May 5th – 8th 2015  
A plus A Gallery, San Marco 3073  
Every day, from 12pm to 8pm  
Free entry

An event organised by the students of the “22nd Course in Curatorial Practices and Contemporary Arts” at The School for Curatorial Studies Venice, directed by Aurora Fonda and Sandro Pignotti.  
A project curated by Tommaso Speretta.

Venice, March 4th, 2015

From MAY 5TH TO MAY 8TH, 2015, during the press preview days of the VENICE ART BIENNALE, American artist Rob Pruitt (1964) will bring his renowned project “ROB PRUITT'S FLEA MARKET” to Venice for the first time. It will take place at A plus A Gallery, and is organized in cooperation with the students of the “22nd Course in Curatorial Practices and Contemporary Arts” at The School for Curatorial Studies Venice.

The project is curated by Tommaso Speretta.

Rob Pruitt invites the INTERNATIONAL ART COMMUNITY, as well as LOCAL ART COMMUNITY, to engage in the lively space of the FLEA MARKET – a convention that channels the timeless vitality of the open-air market, a place where ART AND COMMERCE MIX AND MINGLE.

“Rob Pruitt's Flea Market” is an UNUSUAL BAZAR DES ARTISTES, and an invitational not unlike the Biennale itself. As the aesthetic quality of a “Rob Pruitt's Flea Market” depends on the participation of buyers and sellers alike, EACH DAY HOLDS ITS OWN SURPRISES, unfolding with the primary aim of keeping the creativity totally free of constraints and the audience actively involved.

The range of offerings is broad: ARTISTS SELL THEIR WORK (some create new work on site), present live PERFORMANCES, hold BOOK SIGNINGS, sell their VINTAGE CLOTHES, BOOKS, TRINKETS, or even make FOOD AND DRINK. Visitors can peruse freely and have the chance to come into direct contact with the artists. Pruitt's project blurs the line between art and the quotidian while offering insight into the way the art market works by recreating it with a shifted context.

The engaging nature of the project, which privileges an egalitarian aesthetic, is characteristic of Pruitt's work, continually oscillating between being critical of and being seduced by the production and consumption of our present world. Through a plurality of languages and media ranging from painting to sculpture to installation, Pruitt's work, while voluntarily open to interpretation, comments on the ALLURE AND EXCESS OF THE ART WORLD and of consumer culture, often



through the use of personal and intimate aspects of the artist's life and experience.

As Venice has for many centuries been a crucial crossroads of cultural and trade exchange, making it the ideal location for such an event, this particular incarnation of "Rob Pruitt's Flea Market" is poised to exploit the art world and its personalities who will be descending upon Venice, functioning parallel to the Biennale as an **ALTERNATIVE (ALBEIT MORE "LO-FI") EXPERIENCE**. During the preview days of the Art Biennale, a wide audience of "art insiders" – artists, curators, critics, journalists – converges with the local community and the complex dynamics of such a unique city, resulting in an **EXCITING SOCIAL SITUATION**.

Traditionally, the commercial aspect of art is swept aside or kept from view (the same is often true for the presence/visibility of the artist figure), but the new context provided by the **PERFORMATIVE STRUCTURE** of the flea market breaks down such traditional barriers that separate the artist, the work, and the audience. This becomes a reflection upon the **DYNAMICS OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION IN THE ART WORLD**, upon its economical rules, the social value assigned to objects, and the relationship of **AUTHENTICITY AND PROPERTY TO THE WORK OF ART**.

Artists and visitors become involved in an exchange that may resemble the bartering and haggling of open-air markets of the past, simultaneously reflecting the negotiation process between dealer and collector at one of today's mega art fairs. Ultimately, according to Pruitt, at the end of the day it's a gesture of inclusion – one that attempts to dismantle pretension and make all people feel more comfortable about bringing art into their lives.

Presented for the **FIRST TIME IN VENICE**, "Rob Pruitt's Flea Market" is organized by the students of the "22nd Course in Curatorial Practices and

Contemporary Arts" at **THE SCHOOL FOR CURATORIAL STUDIES VENICE**, directed by Aurora Fonda and Sandro Pignotti. The project is curated by Tommaso Speretta.

The students attending the 22nd edition of the "Course in Curatorial Practices and Contemporary Arts" are: Inessa Baldin, Leonardo Baracchi, Milena Becci, Giulia Belardi, Alice Bontempi, Elena Cardin, Eleonora Coccia, Melania Coretto, Luisa De Palo, Maddalena Di Caprio, Marta Fassina, Giulia Favaron, Valerio Fumarola, Ileana Mantovani, Elisa Marigo, Giovanna Marocco, Giada Marson, Ilaria Medda, Marco Miglioranza, Anna Miotto, Isabella Nuovo, Jonathan Paiano, Giacomo Pecchia, Antonella Potente, Sara Rizzardi, Enrica Sbrogiò, Valentina Tebala and Anna Volpe.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

#### THE SCHOOL FOR CURATORIAL STUDIES VENICE

was founded by Aurora Fonda in 2004 in Venice with the purpose of creating an open laboratory for the expression of creativity in the field of visual arts and the professions related to contemporary art. The "Course in Curatorial Practices and Contemporary Arts", now in its 22nd edition, is articulated on both a practical and theoretical level towards an experimental approach, culminating in a final event organized by the participating students. The course is an ambitious and challenging project that aims to offer a vision of the complex world of contemporary art and offers a constructive contribution through the works produced by the School and its students. [www.corsocuratori.com](http://www.corsocuratori.com)

#### A PLUS A GALLERY

has been the official venue for the Slovenian pavilion at the Venice Biennale since November 2014 and a hub for Slovene and local artists. Since 2015, under the direction of Aurora Fonda,



A plus A will be transformed into a space dedicated to experimenting with new exhibition formats, with the aim of becoming a centre for contemporary art in Venice capable of supporting local and international artists in the production of exhibitions and projects in Venice. Among its principal activities is the The School for Curatorial Studies Venice which since 2004 has welcomed students in Venice to participate in the “Course in Curatorial Practices and Contemporary Arts.”

[www.aplusa.it](http://www.aplusa.it)

#### ROB PRUITT'S FLEA MARKET

was presented for the first time at the Gavin Brown's Enterprise gallery in New York in 1999, bringing together artists such as Elizabeth Peyton, Rachel Harrison, Haim Steinbach, and Meredith Monk. At the 2007 Frieze Art Fair, Pruitt took over the Gavin Brown's Enterprise booth and invited as many artist as would fit. Participants included Sam Taylor-Johnson, Andrea Zittel, Rita Ackerman, Rikrit Tiravanija, and Jeremy Deller. A Christmas incarnation of the Flea Market was held in December 2009 at the Tate Modern in London, the “Rob Pruitt's Christmas Flea Market”. Pruitt's Flea Market took place again in 2012 at the Musée de la Monnaie in Paris, during the “Nuit des Musées”, with the participation of 80 artists, most of them French, following Pruitt's desire to include artists and personalities connected with the place in which the Flea Market is held.

#### ROB PRUITT

was born in Washington in 1964, and currently lives and works in New York. He has a varied practice that includes the ecopolitics and the eminent demise of the Panda bear, American youth, and global consumer culture. His interest in deconstructing the complexities of contemporary art in order to make it accessible to the mainstream is evident in projects such as “101 Art Ideas You Can Do Yourself.” More recently, he has addressed issues of personal and societal mental health, specifically

depression, with a series of color study paintings known as the “Suicide Paintings.”

He has simultaneously maintained a practice of performative works such as “Rob Pruitt's Art Awards at the Guggenheim Museum”, nude artist book signings, and numerous incarnations of “Rob Pruitt's Flea Market” around the world, including an internet version on eBay ([www.robpruittsfleamarket.com](http://www.robpruittsfleamarket.com), [www.robpruittsbookclub.com](http://www.robpruittsbookclub.com)). Rob Pruitt is represented by Gavin Brown's Enterprise in New York.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

A plus A Gallery e The School for Curatorial Studies Venice

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