

ANTON KERN GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

David Shrigley

Signs

January 10 – February 16, 2013

December 18—In this fifth solo exhibition at Anton Kern Gallery, entitled *Signs*, Glasgow-based artist David Shrigley surrounds a large black gong sculpture positioned in the center of the gallery with a variety of signs, such as flags, scrolls and banners, neon and cast bronze texts, as well as lino-cut and letterset texts and poems. As the sound of a gong usually signals a special moment (e.g. waking, eating, starting a movie, or ending a yoga session), Shrigley's sculptural rendering of the percussion instrument sets the tone for the artist's insightful exploration of semiotics, the study of signs and the relation between signs and the things to which they refer.



To his word strategies, Shrigley adds a key ingredient, the concept of the sign and its origin in agreement or convention (such as full stop signifying the end of a sentence). For a sign to have any effect it must be based on common attitudes. Making signs, as opposed to hand-drawn works on paper, enables Shrigley to expand his techniques, e.g. the recognition of unexpected shifts in viewpoints, or the collision of different frames of reference, into a wider, more public range. He turns the sign inside out as if reverting it to an earlier state of innocence where conventions were not yet fully formed. A neon sign reading "Hot Dog Repair" not only combines disparate terms (the ephemeral with the permanent) in a surprising way but also presents itself in the authoritative shape of a shop sign and thereby turning the agreed-upon convention of what is a reasonable and generally accepted service topsy-turvy.

Similarly, Shrigley's lino-cut, letterset poems and texts, reminiscent of word-related art ranging from Concrete Poetry to Christopher Wool's paintings, present characteristic Shrigleyesque thoughts however much less individualized (no handwriting) but rather subversively conventionalized (cut out and printed letters). Stepping away from the markedly handmade towards the more indirect and mechanized process of sign-making lifts the works in this exhibition onto a new level of humor as semiotic critique. Shrigley's signs commandingly undermine their own presumed authority. A sense of liberation prevails!

With over 40 books to his name, David Shrigley is a well-published author and artist. Recent solo exhibitions have been held at the Hayward Gallery, London; the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco; and the Cornerhouse Gallery, Manchester (all 2012). Shrigley has participated in group shows such as *Funny*, Flag Art Foundation, New York; *Zoo*, Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal, Montreal (both 2012); *A Sense of Humor*, Kohler Art Center, Sheboygan, WI; *Life on Mars: 55th Carnegie International*, Pittsburgh (2008); and *Learn to Read*, Tate Modern, London (2007).

The exhibition will open on Thursday, January 10, and run through Saturday, February 16, 2013. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am - 6 pm. For further information and images, please contact the gallery at (t) 212.367.9663, (f) 212.367.8135 or email: nahna@antonkerngallery.com.

Upcoming exhibitions: Wilhelm Sasnal (February 22 – April 6, 2013)

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