



*Cloning Paul McCartney, 2014, Lambda print collage mounted on Dibond sheet, ed. 1/1, cm 100x124*

# PAOLO VEGAS

## stories of people and things

December 5, 2019 – April 13, 2020

Contini Art Gallery

P.zza S. Franceschi 7, Cortina d'Ampezzo

The Contini Art Gallery is pleased to present *Stories of People and Things*, an important solo exhibition dedicated to the artist Paolo Vegas in its **Cortina d'Ampezzo** location.

The exhibition presents a selection of photographic works pertaining to diverse series realized by the artist in the last ten years that propose to the viewer a captivating digital composition characterized by brilliant and saturated colors; a visual expression that clearly taps into the expressive universe of advertising

communication. The artist in fact, began his formation during the nineties in Milan as an advertising photographer through important collaborations (with names such as Giovanni Gastel, Giac Casale and Joe Oppedisano). He utilizes graphic and chromatic expedients in his works precisely as linguistic registers of publicity, inserting them into a tradition of artists that have contributed to enrich the mutual dialogue between advertising and visual arts.

The feminine body takes on a determinant function in the field of advertising; a symbol of seduction and desire *par excellence*, the sinuosity and charm of the feminine figure has always been utilized as an instrument of persuasion and catalyzer of the public's attention. In his compositions, Vegas exasperates and exalts this expedient by presenting the viewer with a sophisticated critique of contemporary society's frivolity and the commercialization of eroticism. His feminine figures in their caricatured sensuality, by their succinct dresses and their pin-up poses, become the emblem of a deep-rooted cultural model which Vegas expresses through an unscrupulous and a captivating aesthetic; it favors the immediate, synthetic and efficient communicability of his precise message.

A distinctive element in Vegas' artistic production is the "cloning" of his own subjects who through an accurate post-production work, are placed on the backgrounds of futuristic landscapes or on glimpses of surreal and dream-like interiors, in a harmonious and skillful choreography creating a temporal overlapping and a narrative movement. Vegas constructs his works as if it were a stage set *ad hoc* for advertising. He selects the location, the cast and screenplay to capture a meticulous, richly detailed composition in a single snapshot. Once the frames are shot, an accurate post-production work begins in which Vegas mounts his narration – as if it were a short film - giving us dynamic instant snapshots filled with a strong emotional impact.

Alongside the systematic reproduction of subjects, in Vegas' work his appropriation of ordinary objects and their materiality is fundamental. Positioning physically real objects on the lacquered surfaces of his digital collages, the artist evokes a reflexion on the dichotomy object-image, while at the same time rendering each work an absolute unique piece. It is precisely the addition of this element that permits the creation of that which he himself defines as *BioCloning*; works that not only reproduce the subject into a space, but also investigates their most inner secrets, by inserting biographical elements such as intimate experiences, desires and memories.

The irreverent poetics of Paolo Vegas, often baroque and without a doubt ironic, invites us to reflect on the infinite reproducibility of digital images and on the continuing marked permeation between real and artificial in today's society.

### **Biografia**

Paolo Vegas, achieved his diploma from the European Institute of Design in 1992 and began his career as a photographer in Milan where he would collaborate with various photographers and advertising agencies. In November of 1997 he presented his works in Milan, in an exhibition titled *People and Things*.

In December of 1997 he took part in an initiative for charity with his contribution to a photographic project for Emergency. In these years he has worked alongside photographers of international fame such as Giac Casale, Joe Oppedisano and Giovanni Gastel for the realization of important advertising campaigns (Barbour with Piero Chiambretti in Scotland in '96, Peugeot '98, Algida '99, Pagine Gialle, Richard Ginori, Irge and the calendar Same. He continued to collaborate with various agencies such as Bosch, Sep, Filatura di Crosa, Diva Ties, Ritmonio, Inab Dekonab, Maio Group, NextEvent and others.

The artistic career of Paolo Vegas was strongly influenced by the work phase described above, where every portrait was an emotion constructed *ad hoc* to be transmitted to the user.

In 2010, the Clonation Project was born in which two or three portraits of the subject are done, creating clones. Vegas makes a succession of snapshots of the same shooting while maintaining the focal distance constant to obtain a uniform depth of field. The camera is still, positioned in the center and is simply rotated according to the desired frame. Every frame constitutes a fragment of the final image.

In his recent works he optimizes a diverse technique which permits him to obtain a clonation in unique and unrepeatable contexts

In 2011 he was invited along with Omar Ronda to participate in the 54th Venice Biennale at the Italian Pavilion with the exhibition "*Cosa Nostra-Sacro Santo-Nostra Cosa*", curated by Vittorio Sgarbi.

The works by Vegas are present in the private collection of M.A.C.I.S.T. (The International Contemporary Museum of Art without Trends), in other public collections and in many private collections.

The artist is represented exclusively by the Contini Art Gallery in Venice and Cortina d' Ampezzo.

**During the exhibition, the viewer is invited to participate in an innovative project based on the immediate interaction between the artist, the work and the user who will become the protagonist of a work of art. The artist, through his skillful use of photographic techniques and innate ability of investigation to trace fundamental aspects of the viewer's life, will create customized personal works. The subject will be cloned, manipulated, reconstructed and in the end immortalized in a unique and exclusive photographic portrait.**

**Inauguration on Saturday, December 28, 2019 at 6:30 pm with the presence of the artist.**

**The exhibition will be open daily from December 5, 2019 through April 13, 2020**

**Opening hours: 10 am -1 pm / 4 – 8 pm**

**Exhibition catalogue with text by Gabriele Simongini available in the gallery**

**Galleria d'Arte Contini**

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