

MoMA EXHIBITION SPANS THE ENTIRE CAREER OF ALIGHIERO BOETTI, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AND INFLUENTIAL ARTISTS OF HIS GENERATION

Alighiero Boetti: Game Plan

July 1–October 1, 2012

The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Gallery, sixth floor

The Donald B. and Catherine C. Marron Atrium, second floor

NEW YORK, June 26, 2012—*Alighiero Boetti: Game Plan* marks the largest presentation of works by Alighiero Boetti (Italian, 1940–1994) in the United States to date. A full retrospective spanning the artist's entire career, the exhibition will be on view in two locations in the Museum from July 1 to October 1, 2012. Celebrating the material diversity, conceptual complexity, and visual beauty of Boetti's work, the exhibition brings together approximately 100 works across many mediums that address Boetti's ideas about order and disorder, non-invention, and the way in which the work is concerned with the whole world, travel, and time. Proving him to be one of the most important and influential international artists of his generation, the exhibition focuses on several thematic threads, demonstrating the artist's interest in exploring recurring motifs in his work instead of a linear development. In The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Gallery on the sixth floor, the exhibition will feature works from the first 15 years of the artist's career, while works in the Donald B. and Catherine C. Marron Atrium on the second floor are drawn from the latter part of his career, focused on Boetti's embroidered pieces and woven rugs. *Alighiero Boetti: Game Plan* is organized in collaboration with the Museo Reina Sofía in Madrid and the Tate Modern in London, where the exhibition was previously on view, and is organized at The Museum of Modern Art by Christian Rattemeyer, The Harvey S. Shipley Miller Associate Curator of Drawings.

Working in his hometown of Turin in the early 1960s among a close community of artists that included Luciano Fabro, Mario Merz, Giulio Paolini, and Michelangelo Pistoletto, among others, Boetti established himself as one of the leading artists of the Arte Povera movement. Organized chronologically, the MoMA exhibition will begin with his sculptural objects, comprising everyday "hardware store" materials including wooden sticks, cardboard, and fiber cement tubes. Brought together (many for the first time since Boetti's seminal exhibition at Galleria Christian Stein in Turin in 1967) and installed in a dense configuration inspired by the original clustered presentation, these early works convey the material experiments of the period and already suggest notions of measurement and chance that Boetti would play with and revise throughout his career.

While Boetti is often chiefly affiliated with the Arte Povera moment, this exhibition will consider Boetti beyond these brief years. In 1969 Boetti began exploring notions of duality and multiplicity (famously ‘twinning’ himself into ‘Alighiero e Boetti’), order and disorder, travel and geography, and he initiated postal and map works imagining distant places. For the work *Viaggi Postali*, begun the summer of 1969, Boetti sent envelopes to friends, family, and fellow artists but used imaginary addresses, forwarding each returned envelope to yet another non-existent place, thus creating imaginary journeys for the people he admired. The exhibition brings together this and other works related to travel, geography, and mapping, many of which relate to his extensive travels to Afghanistan, where he operated the One Hotel as an artist’s project from 1971 until the Soviet invasion in 1979 (archival materials from that project will be on view). During this period, Boetti began working with local artisans to produce embroideries such as the *Mappas* (maps), *Arazzi* (word squares), and *Tuttos* (literally, “Everything”), culminating in his multi-year research project to classify the 1000 longest rivers in the world: an idea equally poetic and scientific, rigorous and absurd.

An important aspect of Boetti’s oeuvre is drawing, which runs as a constant throughout his work. A monumental Biro (ball point pen) drawing from 1973, spelling out the title “Mettere a mondo il mondo (Bringing the world into the world)” points to some of Boetti’s ideas about art making that were fundamental to his practice: that the artist, rather than inventing, simply brings what already exists in the world into the work; and that everything in the world is potentially useful for the artist.

SPONSORSHIP:

The exhibition is made possible by the generous support of two anonymous donors.

Additional funding is provided by The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art.

PUBLICATION:

The accompanying publication, edited by Lynne Cooke, Mark Godfrey and Christian Rattemeyer, presents the most comprehensive overview of the Alighiero Boetti’s career to date. Covering all periods of the artist’s broad oeuvre—including early sculptural experiments associated with Arte Povera, ephemeral Conceptual projects of the 1970s, and monumental embroideries and tapestries fabricated up to his death in 1994—this richly illustrated catalogue brings together leading international critics and curators, each examining a different aspect of Boetti’s achievements, together helping to explain why he remains both influential and inspiring nearly two decades after his death. 277 pages, 257 illustrations. Hardcover, \$50. Available at the MoMA Stores and online at MoMAStore.org. Distributed to the trade through ARTBOOK | D.A.P. in the United States and Canada, and by Tate Publishing outside the United States and Canada.

PUBLIC PROGRAM:

The Radical Decade: Alighiero Boetti between Italy and Afghanistan, 1969-79

Friday, September 28, 1:00-5:00 p.m., T3

Curators Christian Rattemeyer and Mark Godfrey moderate two panels of artists, scholars, curators, and writers as they examine Alighiero Boetti’s artistic practice in Italy in the 1970s, a period of radical politics and widespread social conflict, as well as in Afghanistan, where he made his second home between 1971 and 1979.

AUDIO GUIDE:

The accompanying audio guide features extensive commentary by Christian Rattemeyer, organizer of the exhibition. MoMA Audio is also available for check out on site, as well as online at MoMA.org/audio, and as a podcast on iTunes. MoMA Audio is available free of charge courtesy of Bloomberg.

WEBSITE:

The exhibition is accompanied by a website that enables visitors to explore the works on view in the exhibition. The site launches on July 1, 2012. MoMA.org/boetti

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For downloadable high-resolution images, register at MoMA.org/press.

Public Information:

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019, (212) 708-9400

SUMMER HOURS:

Mondays: 10:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Tuesdays: OPEN 10:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. (June 26 through September 25)

Wednesdays: 10:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Thursdays: 10:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. (July 5 through August 30)

Fridays: 10:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Target Free Friday Nights begin at 4:00 p.m.*

Saturdays: 10:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Sundays: 10:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Museum Admission: \$25 adults; \$18 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$14 full-time students with current I.D. Free, members and children 16 and under. (Includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs). Target Free Friday Nights 4:00–8:00 p.m.

Film Admission: \$12 adults; \$8 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D. \$10 full-time students with current I.D. (For admittance to film programs only)