

# PABLO BRONSTEIN: SKETCHES FOR REGENCY LIVING

9 JUNE—25 SEPTEMBER 2011

## EXHIBITION INFORMATION

Pablo Bronstein signals a new era in the history of the Institute of Contemporary Arts with *Sketches for Regency Living*, a groundbreaking exhibition in which, for the first time, an individual artist is invited to work across the entire ICA building introducing major architectural interventions and choreographing extraordinary art and ballet performances

In this, Bronstein's most ambitious exhibition to date, the work penetrates every area of the ICA – the bar, entrance hall, theatre, galleries, concourse and the Regency Nash & Brandon Rooms overlooking St James's Park. Throughout *Sketches for Regency Living* existing architecture is embellished with forms that reference the Regency period and incorporate various decorative schemes and visitors encounter neo-classical structures, such as a Regency room built within the theatre.

Pablo Bronstein's unique intervention at the ICA forms a point of reference and springboard from which a diverse range of programmed and spontaneous events challenge and engage audiences over the course of the exhibition, inviting artists and audiences to experience the ICA in deconstructed and reinterpreted spaces.

Events include intimate and stylized tours through the building-wide exhibition, inspired by guided visits around country houses and other historic properties that offer insights into the history of Nash House and Bronstein's work, a programme of contemporary classical music, a Gothic weekend symposium and film programme exploring the use of architecture in film. In September the ICA presents two nights of Bronstein's retrospective dance works and an original new ballet devised by Bronstein and co-commissioned by the ICA and Tramway, Scotland's leading venue for contemporary art.

## ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Pablo Bronstein (born 1977, Buenos Aires) lives and works in London. He completed his BA in Fine Art at the Slade (2001) and an MA Visual Arts at Goldsmiths College (2004).



Image ref. 1  
*Tragic Stage*, 2011. Exhibition view © Steve White

Solo exhibitions include *Garden A La Mode* at Tate Britain (2010), *Pablo Bronstein at the Met* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2009), and *Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau*, Munich (2007). Significant group shows include *Move* at the Hayward Gallery (2010), *Manifesta 8*, Murcia (2010), *PERFORMA 07*, New York (2007), and *Tate Triennial* (2006).

## LOWER GALLERY & FOYER

- Foyer:  
*Large Building with Column* (2011)
- Lower Gallery:  
*Tragic Stage* (2011)

At the ICA, everyday throughout the exhibition, two choreographed dance performances will be repeated alternately every hour on the hour within the lower gallery against the backdrop of a Georgian

forecourt – a huge painting commissioned for this exhibition.

The painting depicts a huge public building that serves no purpose, other than being a public space. The dancers perform pieces devised by Bronstein and wearing clothes designed by fashion designer Mary Katrantzou.

> See image ref. 1

Pablo Bronstein explores his interest in *Sprezzatura* through performance and has played with the idea that public spaces are performed in by the public every day. *Sprezzatura* is defined as 'studied carelessness', 'rehearsed spontaneity' or 'well-practiced naturalness'. This was first defined in Renaissance author Baldassare Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* where he described actions appearing as if without any thought or effort.

*Plaza Minuet*, 2007, was performed in four parts in spaces across New York's Financial District. Dancers ignored the code



Image ref. 2. *Phèdre*, 2009.  
Photo: Sebastiano Pellion di Persano

imposed by the architecture of each space, but conformed by performing a series of movements as instructed by Bronstein. In *Phèdre* (2009) Bronstein borrows from Baroque language to construct a pas de deux.  
> See image ref. 2

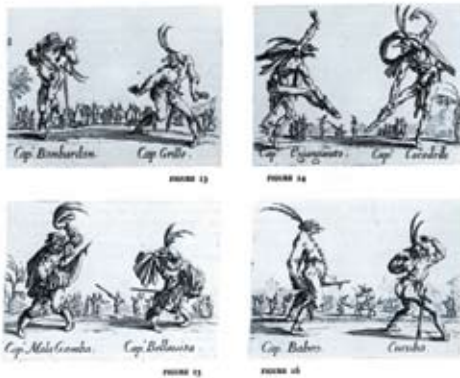


Image ref. 3. Jacques Callot: *I ballidi Sfessania* (1622)

In Bronstein's new pieces performed at the ICA, he references *Jaques Callot, Artist of the Theatre* which can be found in the Reading Room.  
> See image ref. 3

THEATRE

— *Regency Box* (2011)

In the ICA Theatre, Bronstein has created a huge monolithic structure evoking sensibilities of the regency period which will host various related events throughout the exhibition. The structure is painted in cream reflecting the terrace that the ICA sits within. The structure is almost too big for the space it sits within and visitors are invited to view from the platform rather than enter the structure.

John Nash was one of the key figures in creating the style now synonymous with



Image ref. 4. *Regency Box*, 2011  
Exhibition view © Steve White

Regency architecture, and along with Carlton House Terrace he designed the terraces in Regents Street and those running alongside Regents Park in London.

The Regency period in Britain fell after the Georgian era, between 1811 and 1820 and is noted for its elegance and achievements in the fine arts and architecture; and also excess and the impact on British society. During this period the Prince Regent commissioned several buildings including Nash House, now home to the ICA, designed by Nash.



Image ref. 4. *ICA Exhibition view* © Steve White



Image ref. 6. *Large Cabinet / Office*, 2011  
Exhibition view © Steve White

STAIRWELL

*Designs for the Ornamentation of Middle Class Houses*, 2011 – 66 Drawings

The series of drawings presented in the stairwell are in groups of eight or sixteen, and present variations of house frontages almost like a catalogue from which designs can be selected based on how much money can be spent.

The tones in the drawings are matched to the lino floor, designed by Jennie Moncur.

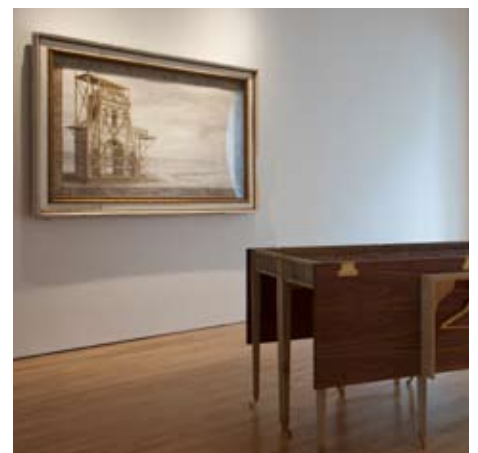


Image ref. 5. Pablo Bronstein, *Pair of Consoles*, 2011  
Exhibition view © Steve White



Image ref. 7  
Upper Gallery exhibition view © Steve White



Image ref. 8. Large Building with Column, 2011  
exhibition view © Steve White

## UPPER GALLERY

In the BBC's *At Home with the Georgians*, historian Amanda Vickery highlights that people during the Georgian era; and then into the regency period, didn't need much of the furniture they had – they simply wanted it. The regency period is noted for excess and people were keen to flaunt their wealth, or the idea that they had wealth.

The two pieces of furniture designed for this exhibition *Pair of Consoles/Campaign Bed*, 2011 and *Large Cabinet/Office*, 2011 are examples of elaborate pieces of furniture both featuring quirks and additional features serving dual functions.

Gallery assistants will carry out demonstrations of the metamorphic furniture throughout the exhibition.

The upper gallery also shows a group of drawings by Bronstein.

Interior Scheme in *Cuban Mahogany and Tropical Green*, 2011, *Relocation of Temple Bar*, 2009, *Erection of Paternoster Square Column*, 2008 and *Drapes in the William Kent Style*, 2010.

The artist imagines himself as the architect creating elaborate designs that explore ideas and possibilities for existing spaces and buildings, or creating new designs for example *Terrace by Nash with an Attic by Soane*, 2011 juxtaposes the formulaic style of a Nashian.

> See image ref. 5

## RELATED ARTISTS + THINKERS

- Paul Noble
- Piranesi
- James Stirling – Architect
- Sir John Soane
- Robert Venturi
- Giorgio de Chirico
- Michael Graves
- Owen Hatherley
- Alan Weisman

## OTHER LINKS

- TRAMWAY: [www.tramway.org](http://www.tramway.org)
- Mary Katrantzou: [www.marykatrantzou.com](http://www.marykatrantzou.com)
- Georgian Society: [www.georgiangroup.org.uk](http://www.georgiangroup.org.uk)
- Architectural Association: [www.aaschool.ac.uk](http://www.aaschool.ac.uk)
- National Trust: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)
- The John Soane Museum: [www.soane.org](http://www.soane.org)

## ACCESS DETAILS

Institute of Contemporary Arts  
The Mall, London SW1Y 5AH

By Tube: Charing Cross, Piccadilly Circus  
By Bus: Routes 3, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 22, 23, 24, 29, 38, 77a, 88, 91, 139, 176

## VISITS

To arrange for group visits please contact:  
Vicky Carmichael, Learning Coordinator  
[vicky.carmichael@ica.org.uk](mailto:vicky.carmichael@ica.org.uk)  
020 7766 1458

## ONLINE RESOURCES

ICA teachers pack of exhibitions since 2007 are downloadable as pdfs on the ICA website:  
<http://www.ica.org.uk/25864/Teachers-Resources/Teachers-Resources.html>

For more information please contact:  
[learning@ica.org.uk](mailto:learning@ica.org.uk)  
or visit: [www.ica.org.uk/learning](http://www.ica.org.uk/learning)