

JAUME PLENSA

April is the cruellest month

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June 12 – July 10, 2020

April is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.
Winter kept us warm, covering
Earth in forgetful snow, feeding
A little life with dried tubers.
— excerpt from “The Waste Land,” T. S. Eliot, 1922



Jaume Plensa, *STILL 02*, 2020.

Galerie Lelong & Co., New York, is pleased to present an online solo exhibition of recent drawings by Jaume Plensa titled *April is the cruellest month*. Executed on paper, the series is titled *STILL* and was created in April this year during his month of confinement at home. Plensa subsequently named the exhibition after the poem “The Waste Land” (1922) by T.S. Eliot.

Jaume Plensa is universally known for his monumental sculptures that reveal a philosophical and spiritual expression of the human body. Sculptures like *Julia* in Madrid’s Plaza de Colón, *Voices* at New York City’s Hudson Yards, *Crown Fountain* in Chicago’s Millennium Park, and St. Helens’ *Dream* have become iconic symbols for their communities. Alongside a decades-long sculpture practice, Plensa has an equally long relationship to drawing. Plensa’s intimate works portray a private search for expression; they are made alone in the studio, in contrast to the sculptures that require a team effort and are done over long periods of time. In 2007, an exhibition of the artist’s drawings was held at the Musée Picasso, Antibes, France in conjunction with the unveiling of a new sculpture measuring 26 feet high on the museum’s terrace.

As in many of Plensa’s works, language is incorporated into the imagery. He used words like anxiety, fear, and love, calling attention to the various psychological states people experienced during the months of confinement. The title, *STILL*, resonates on many levels: it connotes a period of waiting, the gathering of energy, a state of silence and quietness. Individual figures standing in indefinable spaces look at a form that could be sculptures or interpreted as the unknown; they look for answers or are perhaps deep in thought. Language is not the only means to communicate and can sometimes work against comprehension. “We are best when together,” says Plensa. In the contemplation of these drawings, we see a world both intimate and expansive, expressive of shared human experience during a time when the world was “still.”

— Mary Sabbatino, Spring 2020

Jaume Plensa was born in 1955 in Barcelona, Spain, where he currently lives and works. The artist has presented solo exhibitions at prestigious institutions around the globe including the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Wisconsin; Musée d'art moderne et contemporain de Saint-Étienne Métropole, Saint-Étienne, France; Institut Valencia d'Art Moderne, Spain; Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, Texas; Musée Picasso, France; Yorkshire Sculpture Park, England; and the Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Finland. *Jaume Plensa: Human Landscape* was a landmark solo exhibition that debuted at the Cheekwood Botanical Garden & Museum of Art, Tennessee and travelled to the Tampa Museum of Art, Florida and Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio. *Jaume Plensa: Together* was presented at the Basilica San Giorgio Maggiore in Italy as a collateral event of the 56th Venice Biennale.

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