

METRO PICTURES

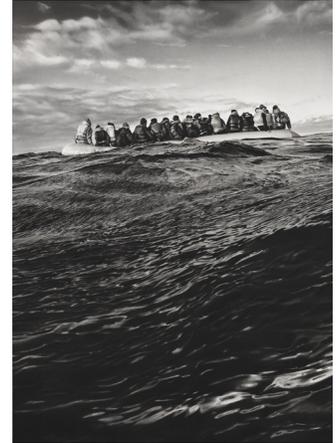
Robert Longo

The Destroyer Cycle

May 3 - June 17, 2017

In his exhibition *The Destroyer Cycle* at Metro Pictures, Robert Longo considers world events through the lens of American media with twelve new, large-scale charcoal drawings. The painstakingly rendered works are visualizations of power, protest, desperation, futility, and aggression that together create a searing portrait of our time.

The Destroyer Cycle continues Longo's ardent examination of how to re-engage pictures through drawing. For each exhibited work, Longo has developed a technique that reflects the medium of the drawing's source image. *Untitled (Prisoners, Kandahar Airport)* captures the graininess of the original infrared telephoto image of prisoners being transported to a CIA black site, as well as the dot pattern of the photograph's reproduction in a newspaper. Similarly menacing, but using very different subject matter, *Untitled (Teletubbies)* is based on a still from the surreal children's TV series that first aired in the UK in 1997. Reflecting already outdated video technology, Longo meticulously rendered the pixilation of the low-quality video still, scrambling the baffling resonance of these alien, cult figures.



Untitled (Raft at Sea), 2016 - 2017 (detail)
triptych; charcoal on mounted paper.

Other works are a reminder that political acts are not always visible. *Untitled (X-Ray of Venus with a Mirror, 1555, After Titian)* portrays an x-ray image of the titular painting that Longo accessed at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. The x-ray reveals that the original composition of the painting—a male and female figure, clothed, in embrace—has been altered to focus on a single naked goddess and her reflection. Part of a series of art historical x-ray drawings, these works manifest another, often hidden kind of truth for Longo, while also offering a metaphor for the status and meaning of images in an age of “alternative facts.”

Intended as the close of the exhibition and sprawling across three panels is *Untitled (Raft at Sea)*. A composite image partially sourced from the cover of a Doctors Without Borders publication, the drawing depicts refugees on a raft amidst the vast, turbulent Mediterranean Sea. Its striking perspective positions the viewer as if looking up at the boat from the water.

A new book focused on Longo's 2014 Metro Pictures exhibition of drawings based on iconic Abstract Expressionist paintings will be released during the run of the exhibition. Published by Hatje Cantz, *Gang of Cosmos: The Abstract Expressionist Drawings* includes an essay by Andrew Durbin.

Last year the Garage Museum in Moscow presented a major exhibition of Longo's works alongside etchings by Francisco Goya and sketches and films by Sergei Eisenstein. An iteration of the exhibition, titled *Proof*, will open at the Brooklyn Museum on September 8. Later that month Longo also opens an exhibition at the Sara Hildén Art Museum in Finland.

Longo has had one-person exhibitions at the Musée d'art moderne et d'art contemporain, Nice; Kunstmuseen Krefeld, Germany; Albertina, Vienna; Isetan Museum of Art, Tokyo; Deichtorhallen, Hamburg; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and the Menil Collection, Houston. He has been included in Documenta 7 and 8, the 1983 and 2004 Whitney Biennials, and the 47th Venice Biennale.