

MARIANO DAL VERME | ON DRAWING

Sicardi Gallery Exhibition

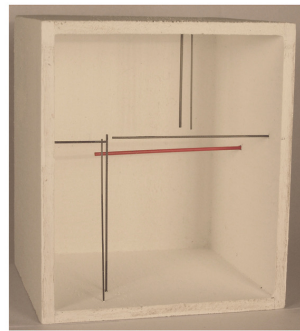
July 11 – August 31, 2013

"I'd like to get the whole discipline of drawing and operate on it."

In *On Drawing*, Mariano Dal Verme continues his longstanding interrogation of the discipline of drawing. In the early 2000s, Dal Verme began to experiment with various methods of creating a drawing. Listening to a curator at the New York Drawing Center define drawing as "a unique work of graphite on paper" gave the artist a position to work against, and he found himself asking why the classification of drawing was restricted to one category. Further, Dal Verme questioned why graphite had to exist on top of and separate from the paper. Experimenting with this idea, he created a series of work in which drawn lines appear to project from the surface of the paper. Begun on the paper, the lines connect to pieces of graphite, like pencil leads. Dal Verme continued to highlight the separation between the materials of paper and graphite in his 2004 *Untitled (Drawing)* series. Here paper is left out of the drawing and is replaced by a soft wood. Dal Verme drills cylindrical pieces of graphite into the sides of the frame so that they appear to float and form intersecting lines. From one point of view, they appear to be drawn lines on a sheet of paper. As the viewer approaches the work, however, the intersection of the graphite breaks apart and the viewer discovers a

hidden depth to the work as well as a lack of paper backing: the drawings become sculptures. Responding to the Drawing Center curator with this work, Dal Verme posits that a drawing is much more than a gradient of graphite forced onto the face of a sheet of paper by the artist's hand.

Other projects including *Re-Collection* and *For Esport* extend Dal Verme's critique to the practices of the art industry. For *Re-Collection* (2002), Dal Verme and two friends—all artists who work as preparators at MALBA—created a collection outside the normal circuits of the art market. In the work, Dal Verme, Fernando Brizuela, and Beto De Volder selected a diverse collection of contemporary art from Argentina. These works, donated by artists and friends of the artists, were displayed in the basement of the Museo de Arte



Mariano Dal Verme, *Untitled (Drawing)*, 2004.

Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA). A typical collection in a museum signifies that the work is not owned by the museum, but is on loan from a collector or a private institution. By circumventing the normal process of museum acquisition, the artists challenged the practices of institutional exhibitions; the works were shown in MALBA, one of the most prestigious institutions in Latin America without going through the rigorous acquisition and sale process.

In his 2006 collaboration with Andrés Toro and Fernando Brizuela, *For Esport*, Dal Verme transformed the window of the Cultural Center of Spain into a mock souvenir shop, displaying poorly constructed knock-offs of the trinkets sold on the street outside. The site-specific project worked against tourist consumption of the watered-down national symbols of Gardel, Evita, Che Guevara, fútbol and chorizo, while simultaneously critiquing the contemporary art market and its export of Argentine art.

In his *On Drawing* series, Dal Verme continues to challenge the viewer's understanding of



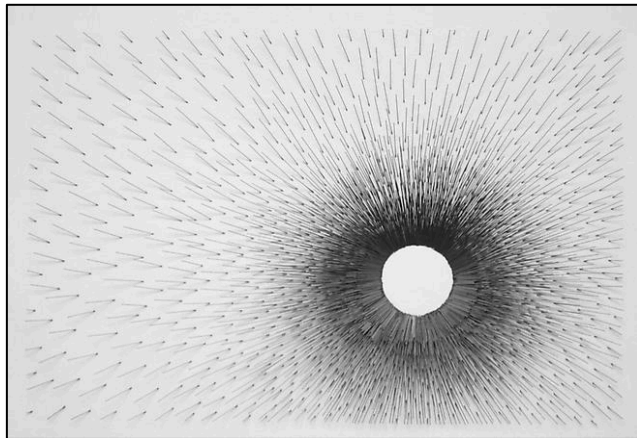
Mariano Dal Verme, *La Re-Colección*, 2004.

drawing by creating three-dimensional structures comprised entirely of graphite leads, glue, and paper. Manipulating the space between the lead pieces and the paper, Dal Verme captures a physical dimension that is lost in a traditional drawing, comprised of graphite on paper. From afar, one piece appears to be a flat line drawing comprised of dense markings in the center that gain distance between one another as they spread across the paper. When the viewer approaches the piece, she finds that the composition of the work is just as she thought, but a new dimension has been added. The lines are not superficial markings but pieces of graphite that prick the surface of the paper and hang in the air. Other works reverse the relationship between paper and graphite in a drawing. In one, Dal Verme pulls the drawing up from the surface of the paper by building a labyrinth of graphite leads that support a removed section of the paper. The traditional relationship of graphite on paper is broken and replaced by paper on graphite on paper, giving equal importance to the materials. By breaking apart, reformulating, and fusing the now equally present materials, Mariano Dal Verme creates new modes of thinking about the discipline of drawing.

Sarah Q. Barnett
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Mariano Dal Verme, *For Esport*, 2006.



Mariano Dal Verme, *Untitled*, 2013.

MARIANO DAL VERME, a native of Buenos Aires, first studied art at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes Prilidiano Pueyrredón in the mid-1990s. During this time he participated in many artist collectives, and in 1998, he co-founded Kunstwerks, a company that created reproducible art and everyday objects. His work is included in the collection of the Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA). His work has been included in exhibitions at Le Bar, Ruth Benzacar Gallery, and Centro Cultural de España, all in Buenos Aires. Mariano Dal Verme lives and works in Buenos Aires.