

BOB AND ROBERTA SMITH

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BOB AND ROBERTA SMITH

ART IS BETWEEN US

12 dicembre 2024 - 14 febbraio 2025

Bob e Roberta Smith, al secolo Patrick Brill OBE RA è artista, attivista, scrittore, autore, musicista, sostenitore dell'educazione artistica ed è uno tra i principali oratori britannici contemporanei. Conosciuto in tutto il mondo per i suoi slogan colorati, è un convinto sostenitore dell'arte come strumento fondamentale per la vita democratica.

Nella mostra presso la galleria MAAB propone una serie di opere sul tema del connubio tra Italia e Gran Bretagna all'indomani della Brexit. *Art is between us* unisce alla cultura punk, il senso di una critica profonda alle scelte dei governi attuali inglesi, proponendo soluzioni per salvare l'Inghilterra dall'isolamento dall'Europa.

Lo spazio milanese, allestito per l'occasione dall'artista e da Massimiliano Scuderi, quest'ultimo curatore della mostra, rappresenta una serie di opere sotto forma di una *Wunderkammer* di oggetti d'uso quotidiano che diventano il correlativo oggettivo degli slogan dipinti a mano, il cui messaggio rende lo spazio espositivo immerso in un'atmosfera pacificante ed amorevole. Una sorta di agenzia matrimoniale eversiva, composta da numerosi *object trouvè*, come sportelli di vecchi elettrodomestici e tavolini da bar ecc.

Ispirato dall'incontro con un altro grande artista, James Lee Byars, che alla Biennale di Venezia del '93 gli regalò uno dei suoi adesivi dorati recante la scritta "La tua presenza è la tua migliore performance", B&R Smith opera non tanto nel definire un'arte pubblica quanto nel portare l'arte al pubblico. Da allora il suo impegno - vicino alla definizione di realismo operativo di Nicolas Bourriaud - si è declinato in molti settori della vita, utilizzando l'arte

come strumento per la realizzazione di un'opera collettiva.

Evidente in mostra anche la relazione con un'altra grande opera di Marcel Duchamp, *Le Grand Verre* (il Grande Vetro, 1915/1923), definita dalla critica mondiale come uno dei capolavori dell'arte contemporanea. Come per l'opera di Duchamp, che poneva al centro metaforicamente la sposa messa a nudo e gli scapoli sotto forma di macchine celibi, il nucleo di opere in mostra mirano ad affermare il principio che, come l'artista è libero di creare la propria arte, lo è lo spettatore di interpretarla.

Tra le mostre di Bob and Roberta Smith ricordiamo le recenti personali del 2023 presso la Fondazione Zimei di Pescara e Roma, del 2022 presso la TATE Modern di Londra, presso il museo la Panacee di Montpellier, il PS1 MOMA di New York, la partecipazione alle mostre collettive *Altermodern* a cura di Nicolas Bourriaud, allo ZKM di Karlsruhe, al CCAC di San Francisco a cura Ralph Rugoff tra le altre.

Informazioni essenziali

MAAB Gallery

via Nerino 3 – 20123 Milano

Dal 12 dicembre 2024 al 14 febbraio 2025

Aperta dal lunedì al venerdì, 10.30 – 18

Inaugurazione: giovedì 12 dicembre 2024, ore 18

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BOB AND ROBERTA SMITH

ART IS BETWEEN US

12 December 2024 - 14 February 2025

Bob and Roberta Smith – real name Patrick Brill OBE RA – is an artist, activist, writer, author, musician, supporter of art education and one of the UK's foremost keynote speakers. Famous around the world for his brightly coloured slogans, he is a passionate advocate for art as a vital tool of democracy.

His show at MAAB features a series of works on the bond between Italy and the United Kingdom in the aftermath of Brexit. *Art is between us* is a mix of punk culture and excoriating criticism of the choices made by recent British governments, filled with ideas on how the UK can avoid isolation from Europe.

The artist installed the exhibition at the Milanese gallery with the help of curator Massimiliano Scuderi. It takes the form of a *Wunderkammer*, a cabinet of curiosities, filled with found objects ranging from old appliance doors to café tables and various other everyday items. These items serve as physical manifestations of the hand-painted slogans, object correlatives that imbue the space with a calming, loving atmosphere. The overall effect is that of a subversive matchmaking agency.

Inspired by a meeting with another great artist, James Lee Byars, who at the 1993 Venice Biennale gave him one of his gold stickers bearing the slogan 'Your presence is your best work', B&R Smith does not aim to define public art so much as bring art to the public. Since then, he has applied this approach – which aligns closely with Nicolas Bourriaud's definition of operative realism – in a variety of fields, using art as a tool for the creation

of collective works.

Another iconic work that has influenced the exhibition is *Le Grande Verre* (The Large Glass 1915–1923) by Marcel Duchamp, hailed as a masterpiece of contemporary art by critics worldwide. Like Duchamp's work, which metaphorically places the naked bride at its centre and depicts the bachelors as machines, this collection emphasises the freedom of both the artist and the viewer: the artist to create and the viewer to interpret.

Other solo exhibitions by Bob and Roberta Smith include shows at Fondazione Zimei in Pescara and Rome (2023), the Tate Modern in London (2022), the Panacée in Montpellier and MoMA PS1 in New York. His work has also been featured in group exhibitions like Nicolas Bourriaud's *Altermodern*, as well as shows at the ZKM in Karlsruhe and San Francisco's CCAC (the latter curated by Ralph Rugoff), among others.

Hard Facts

MAAB Gallery

via Nerino 3 – 20123 Milano

From December 12th 2024 to February 14th 2025

Open from Monday to Friday, 10.30 am – 6 pm

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Bob and Roberta Smith, *Art is between us*, MAAB Gallery, Milano, 2024

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Bob and Roberta Smith, *Art is between us*, MAAB Gallery, Milano, 2024

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Bob and Roberta Smith, *Art is between us*, MAAB Gallery, Milano, 2024

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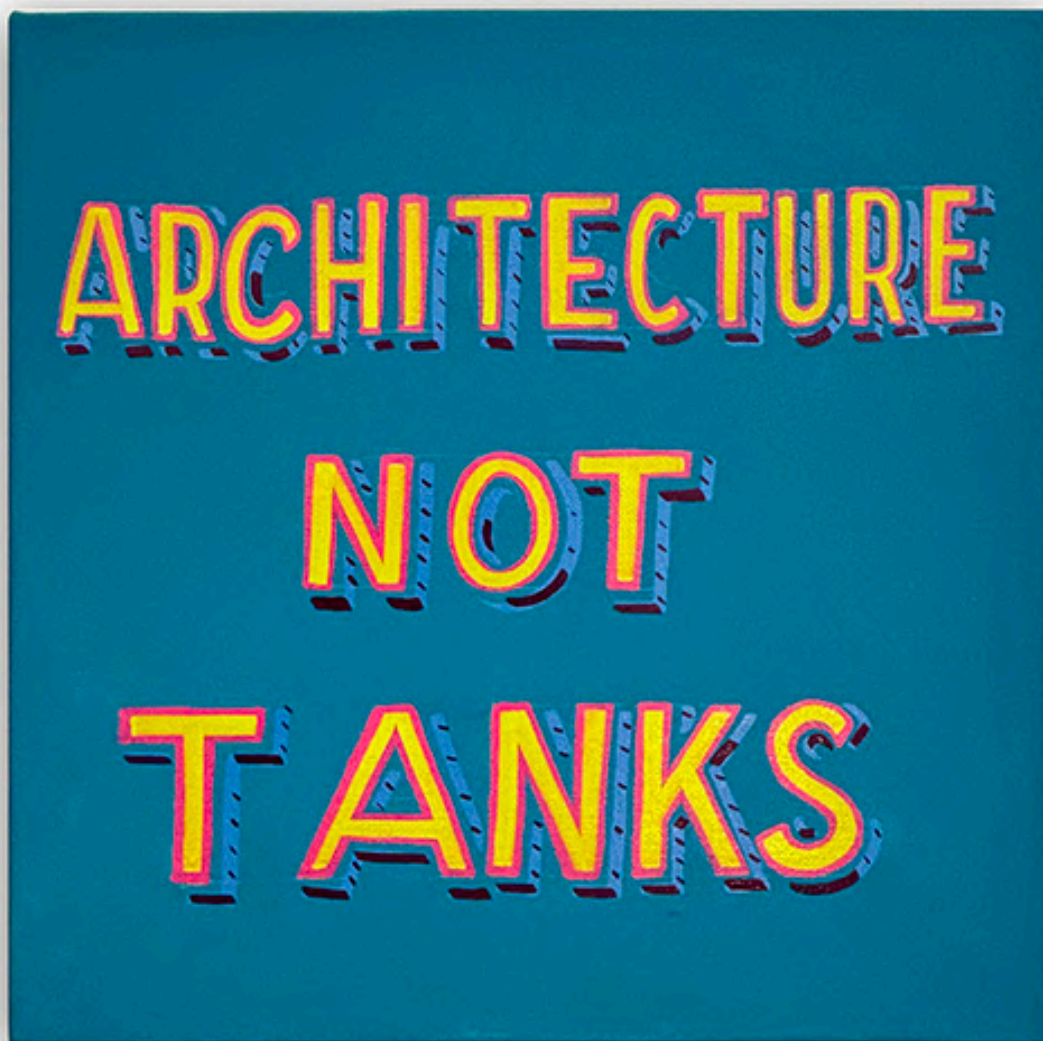
Bob and Roberta Smith

Art materials, music lessons, dancing, 2025

vernice su porta in legno

paint on wooden door

213 x 77 x 3,5 cm (83,86 x 30,31 x 1,38 in)



Bob and Roberta Smith
Architecture not tanks, 2025
vernice su tela
paint on canvas
60 x 60 cm (23,62 x 23,62 in)

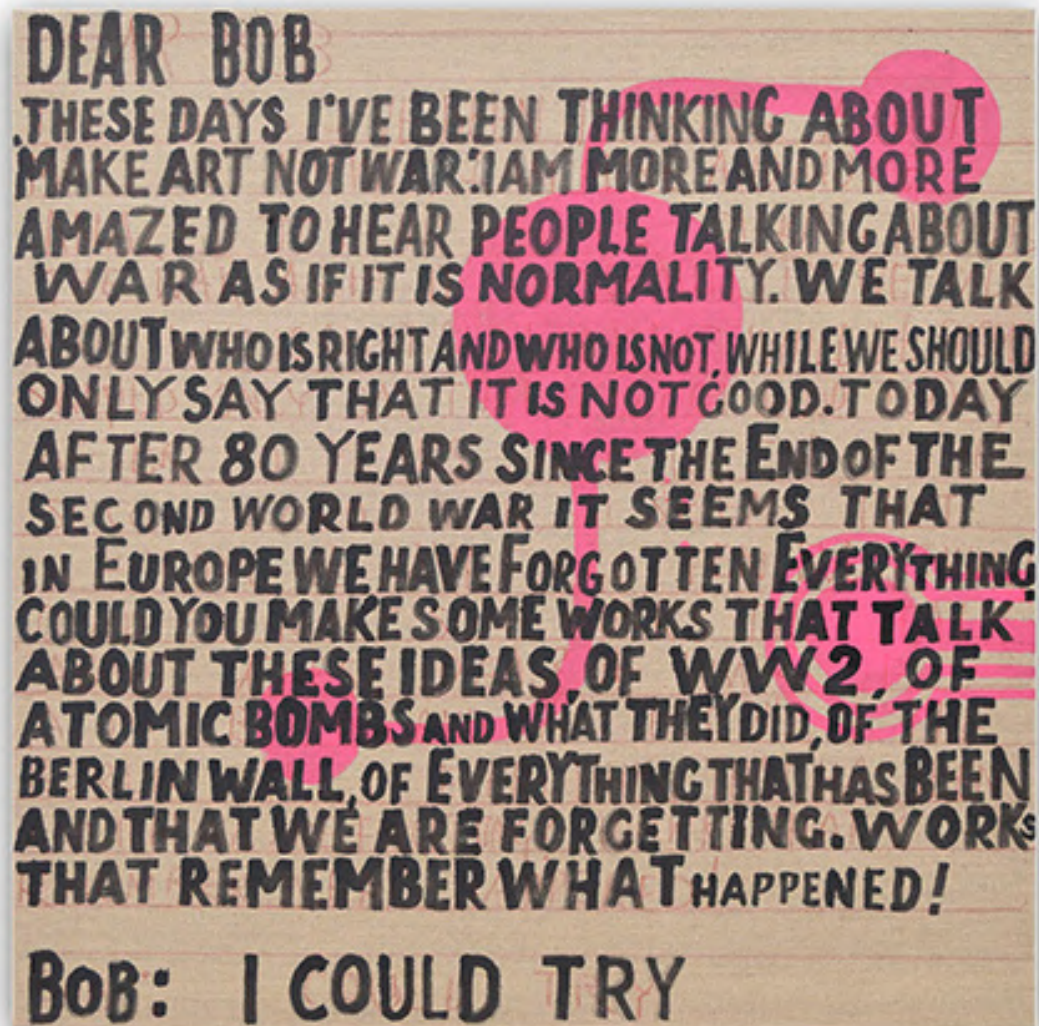


Bob and Roberta Smith
Gesso acrilico not drones, 2025
vernice su tela
paint on canvas
60 x 60 cm (23,62 x 23,62 in)

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DEAR BOB
THESE DAYS I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT
MAKE ART NOT WAR. I AM MORE AND MORE
AMAZED TO HEAR PEOPLE TALKING ABOUT
WAR AS IF IT IS NORMALITY. WE TALK
ABOUT WHO IS RIGHT AND WHO IS NOT, WHILE WE SHOULD
ONLY SAY THAT IT IS NOT GOOD. TODAY
AFTER 80 YEARS SINCE THE END OF THE
SECOND WORLD WAR IT SEEMS THAT
IN EUROPE WE HAVE FORGOTTEN EVERYTHING.
COULD YOU MAKE SOME WORKS THAT TALK
ABOUT THESE IDEAS, OF WW2, OF
ATOMIC BOMBS AND WHAT THEY DID, OF THE
BERLIN WALL, OF EVERYTHING THAT HAS BEEN
AND THAT WE ARE FORGETTING. WORKS
THAT REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED!

Bob: I COULD TRY

Bob and Roberta Smith

Dear Bob, these days I've been thinking about...., 202

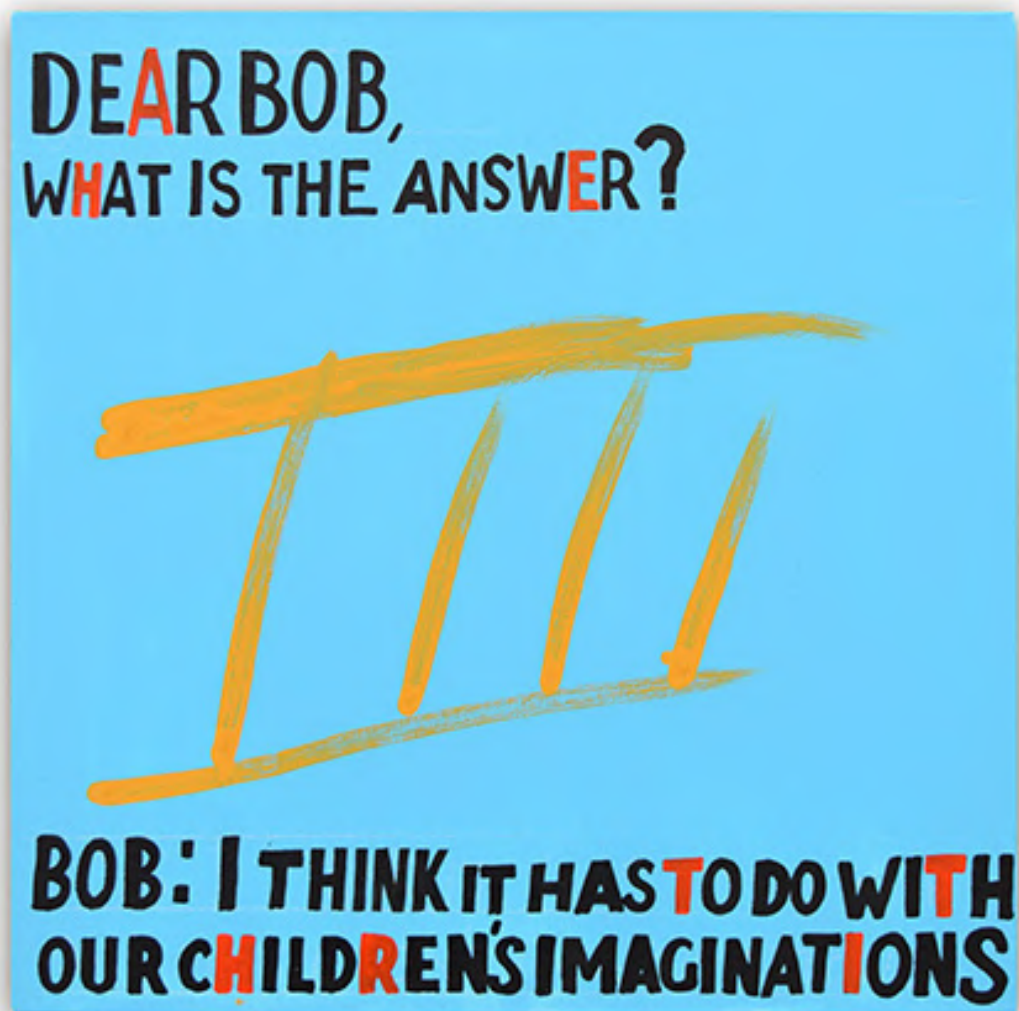
vernice su tela

paint on canvas

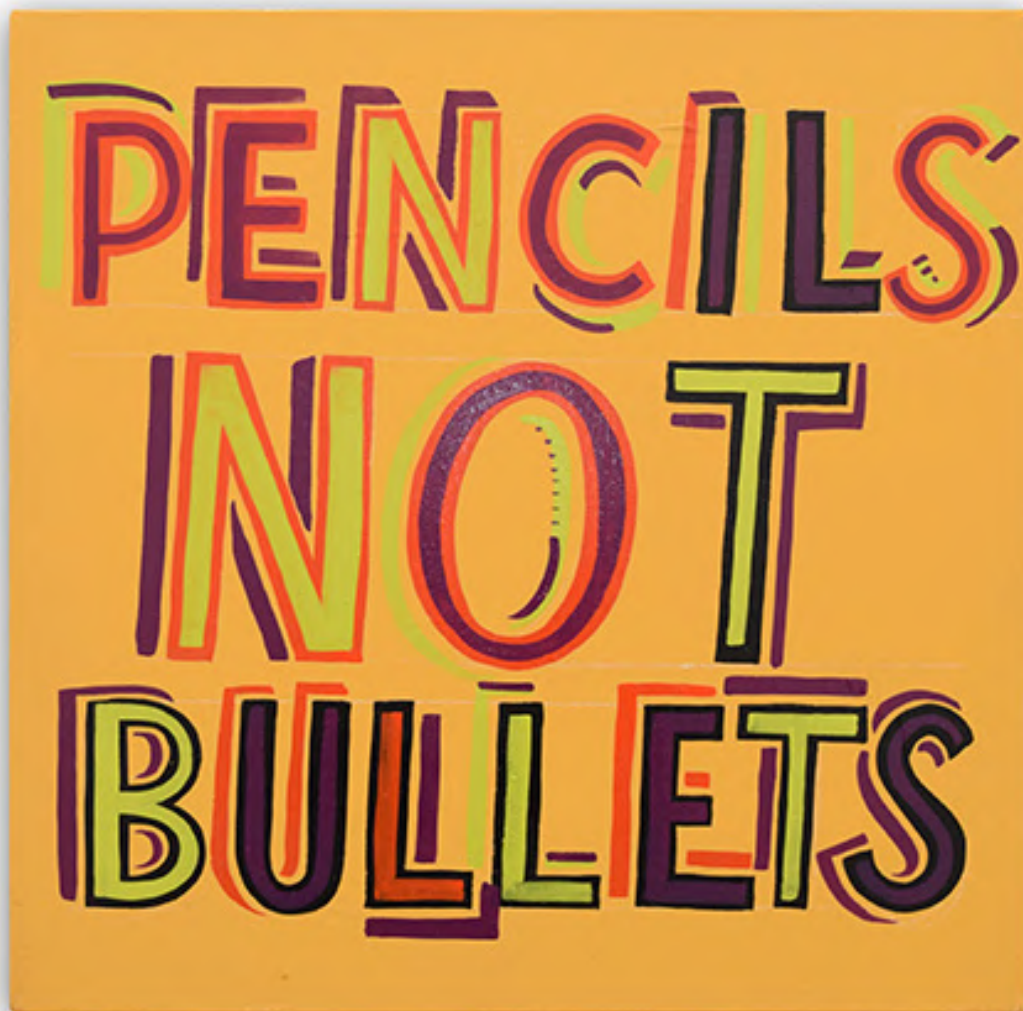
60 x 60 cm (23,62 x 23,62 in)



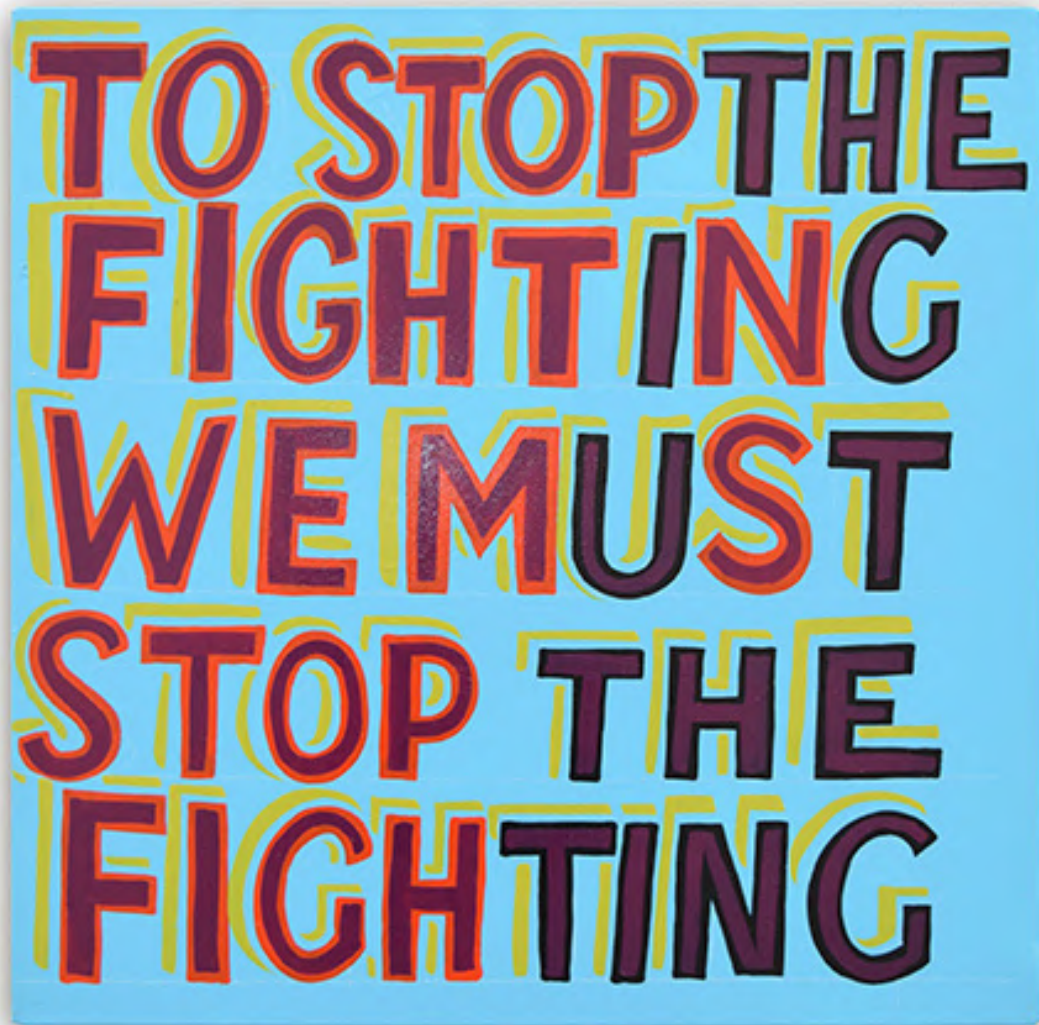
Bob and Roberta Smith
Paint not plastic explosive, 2025
vernice su tela
paint on canvas
60 x 60 cm (23,62 x 23,62 in)



Bob and Roberta Smith
Dear Bob, what is the answer?, 2025
vernice su tela
paint on canvas
60 x 60 cm (23,62 x 23,62 in)



Bob and Roberta Smith
Pencils not bullets, 2025
vernice su tela
paint on canvas
60 x 60 cm (23,62 x 23,62 in)



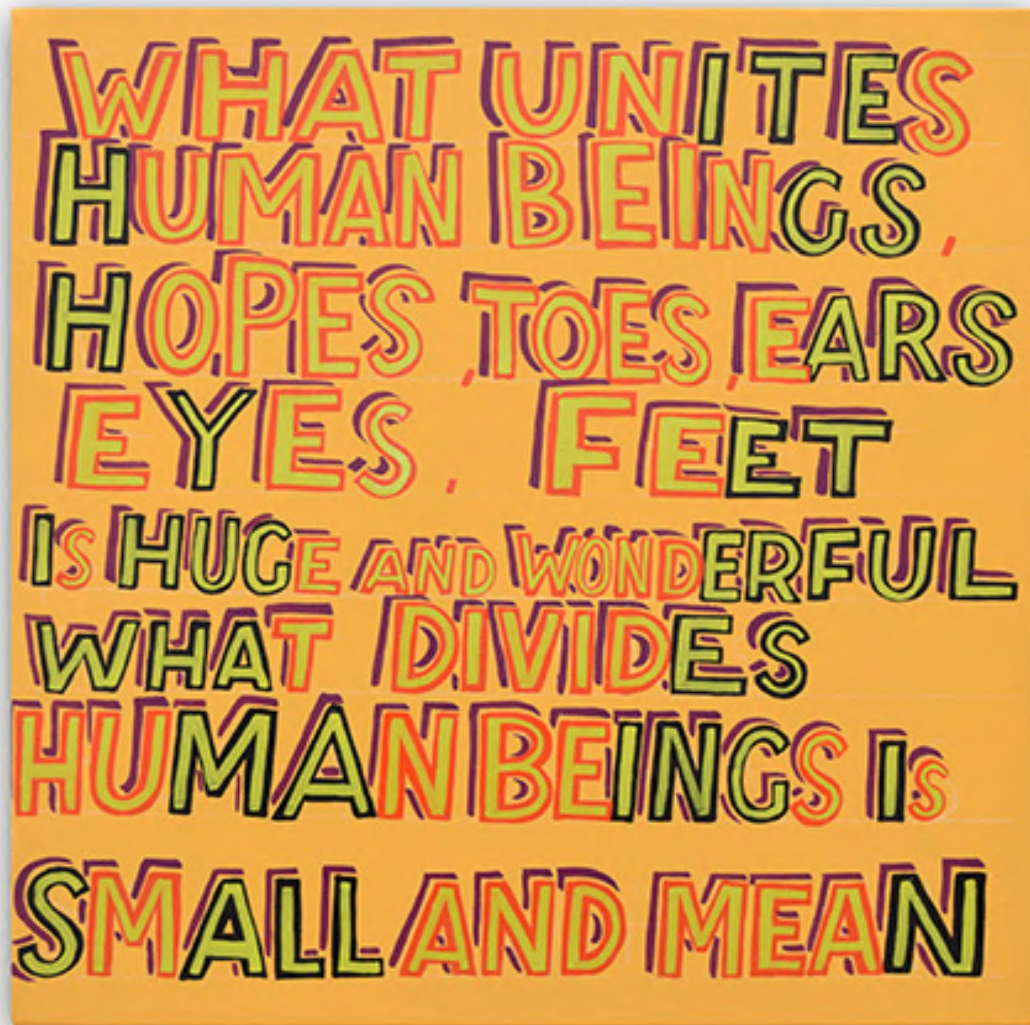
Bob and Roberta Smith

To stop the fighting we must stop the fighting, 2025

vernice su tela

paint on canvas

60 x 60 cm (23,62 x 23,62 in)



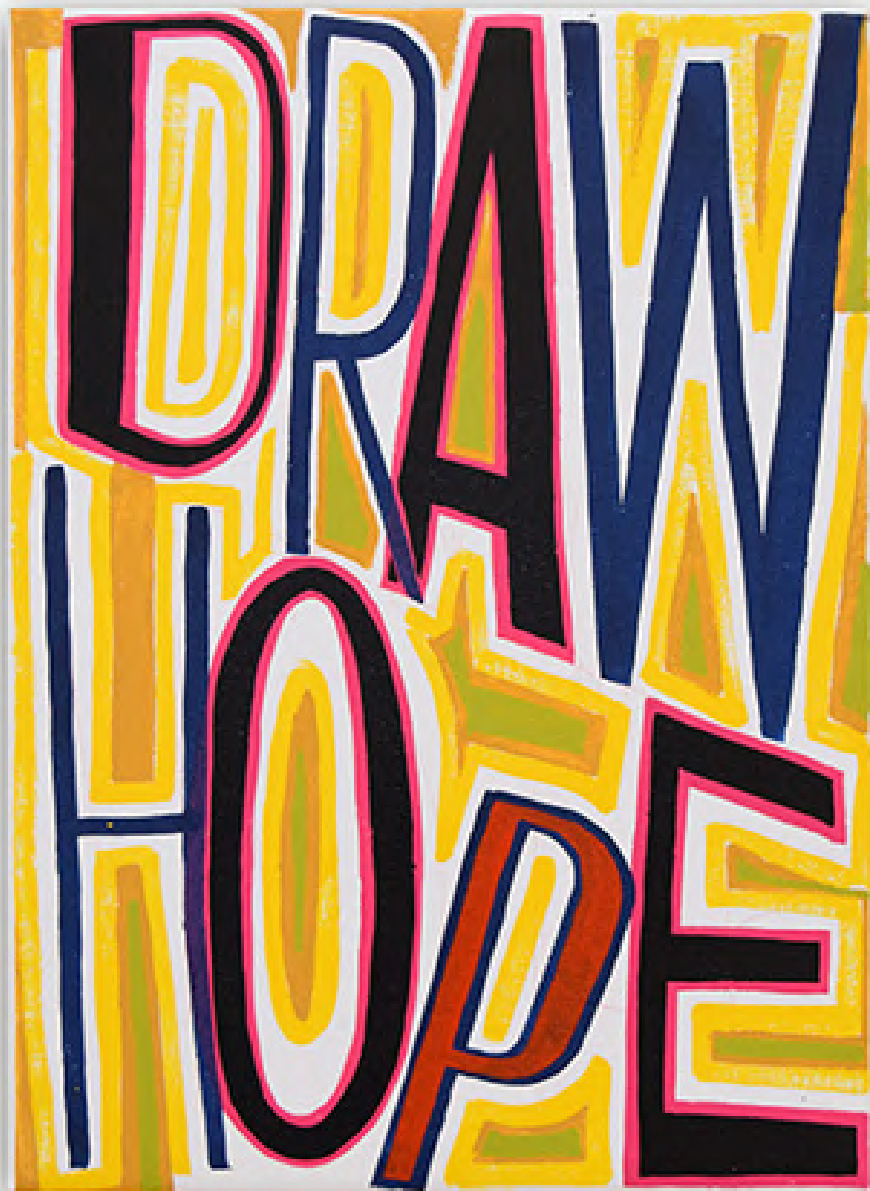
Bob and Roberta Smith
What unites human beings..., 2025
vernice su tela
paint on canvas
60 x 60 cm (23,62 x 23,62 in)



Bob and Roberta Smith
Art is you human rights, 2025
vernice su tela
paint on canvas
60 x 70 cm (23,62 x 27,56 in)



Bob and Roberta Smith
Art is like love, 2024
vernice su tela
paint on canvas
70 x 50 cm (27,56 x 19,68 in)



Bob and Roberta Smith
Draw hope, 2024
vernice su tela
paint on canvas
70 x 50 cm (27,56 x 19,68 in)

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Bob and Roberta Smith

Art is like love art exists between us, 2024

vernice su tela

paint on canvas

100 x 70 cm (39,37 x 27,56 in)

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Bob and Roberta Smith

Art is like love art exists between us, 2024

vernice su tela

paint on canvas

100 x 70 cm (39,37 x 27,56 in)



Bob and Roberta Smith
Paint a pink on pink painting, 2024
vernice su tela
paint on canvas
60 x 60 cm (23,62 x 23,62 in)

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BOB AND ROBERTA SMITH

Born in 1963 in London, UK
Lives and works in London, UK

PROFESSIONAL ROLES

2014-17

Tate Modern, Council Member

2014-current

The Big Draw, Patron

2014-17

The National Campaign for the Arts, Trustee

2014-21

Art UK (formerly known as The Public Catalogue Foundation), Trustee

2012-current

NSEAD (National Society for Education in Art & Design), Patron

2010-14

Tate Gallery Artist Trustee, responsibilities included: Board of Tate, Tate Modern and Tate Liverpool Councils and the Nomination and Collection Committees.

2002-05

Chisenhale Gallery, Trustee

EMPLOYMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

2012-current

0.5 Associate Professor, **Cass School of Art**,
London Metropolitan University

1995-2012

0.5 Senior Lecturer in Fine Art, **Cass School of Art**, London Metropolitan University

2000-03

Lecturer, Post Graduate MA **Goldsmith's College**, University of London (Bob still visits the programme)

1993-96

Lecturer Fine Art Foundation, **Farnham School of Art** (now UCA Farnham)

1991-1995

Lecturer Fine Art BA, **John Moores University**, Liverpool

EDUCATION AND AWARDS

2016

Elected a member of the Royal Academy

2011

Honorary Fellows of Arts University College Bournemouth

1991-93

MA Fine Art, Goldsmith College, London

1981-85

BA Fine Art (First Class Hons.) University of Reading

1985-87

Prix de Rome, British Academy, Roma

1988-90

Harkness Fellowship in conjunction with Cooper Union School of Arts & Sciences, New York

SOLO EXHIBITIONS (SELECTED)

2025

The Storm, Anthony Wilkinson Gallery, London

2024

Art is between us, MAAB Gallery, Milano

We Have Only Got Each Other, Royal Academy of Arts, London

Art is about love, Viviane Roberta Projects, London

2023

A Puzzle 4U, Mayfair, Bond Street Flag project, Royal Academy, London

Sposare un inglese, marry an italian, A Sud, Pescara

2022

Thamesmead Codex, Tate Modern, London

The Word Observatory, Von Barth, Copenhagen

The Bob Shop, Tate Modern, London

2021

Look, Listen, Make Things, Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston

Draw Hope, Cement Fields, UK

2020

Look Listen Make Things, The Harris Museum, Preston

2019

Paint Freedom, Shire Hall, Historic Court House, Dorchester

2018

ACTIVIST, La Panacée - MoCo. Montpellier Contemporain, Montpellier

The Whole World is an Art School!, Von Bartha, Basel

The Secret to a Good Life, Royal Academy London

Apathy Band LP show, Handel Street Projects, London

2017

This is a Freedom Centre, HSAD Hull city of culture

Folkestone is an Art School, Folkestone Triennial Commission

2015

Art Is Your Human Right, William Morris Gallery, London

Art For All, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton

a message from the mountain top, Von Bartha, S-chanf

2014

Art Amnesty, Museum of Modern Art PS1, New York

Get personal and political, Von Bartha, Basel

2013

Art Party Conference (film & event with contributors), Crescent Arts, Scarborough

2012

The Art Party of the UK, Hales Gallery, London

Who is Community?, London Transport Stratford Station

You Should Be in Charge, Work Gallery

2011

The Gotham Golem, Pierogi Gallery, New York

I have Forgotten was there a past?, Leeds City Art Gallery

2010

This is how we are going to change the world. I should be in charge, Hales Gallery, London

Bob and Roberta Smith design the D&AD Annual
Make your own damn art, Galleria Cesare Manzo, Pescara

2009

Let 100,000 Kunstverienen Bloom, Mead Gallery
This Artist is deeply dangerous, Beaconfield Art Space

Galerie Kusseneers, Antwerp, Belgium

I was up all night making this, Galleria Cesare Manzo, Roma

2008

Christmas Tree, Tate Britain

Long Short Story Backwards, Greenwich Peninsula Public Art Project, London

2007

Shop Local, public art project and exhibition Peer, Hoxton St.

Shall I Stay or Should I go, Turner Contemporary, Margate

2006

The Captains Log of the Voyage of the Human Being, Galerie Kusseneers, Antwerp

Bob & Roberta Smith – The humanist, Carbone.

to, Torino

The Nest, Hales Gallery, London

2004

Help Build The Ruins of Democracy, The Baltic, Newcastle

Before There was TV There was Radio, CD project, Folkestone Library

2003

The Mobile Reality Creator, Compton Verney

2002

It's not easy being a famous Artist, Galerie Praz Delavallade, Paris

Useless men and Stupid Women, Anthony Wilkinson Gallery, London

Bunch of Cowards, Collective Gallery, Edinburgh

The New York Art Amnesty, Pierogi 2000, New York

2001

A is for Book, Book, Project published by Imprint Gallery, London

Make Me a Sandwich, Richard Heller Gallery, Los Angeles

Suburbs Are the New Center - Create Your Own Reality, Carbone.to, Torino

Unfortunate, Bob Smith hosts the search for the worst artwork in Britain, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London

2000

26 Instructions, Turnaround at the Hayward, Hayward Gallery, London

Statements, ART31 Basel - Anthony Wilkinson Gallery, London, Basel

L'École Burrows & Bob Smith, Galerie Praz-Delavallade, Paris – with David Burrows

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1999

Improve the Cat, Galleria Carbone, Torino

Silent Video, Virgin Mega Store, London

1998

Bob and Roberta Smith, Pierogi 2000, New York

1997

Don't Hate Sculpt, Chisenhale Gallery, London

Bob and Roberta Smith, Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (SELECTED)

2025

Honk if you're Jesus, Paul Stolper Gallery, London

2023

Wor(L)ds, Fondazione Zimei-Palazzo Cavallarini Lazzaroni, Roma
Limited Editions in support of Tate, Tate

2022

Make Art Not War: Pierogi for Peace, Pierogi

2021

Let's Talk About Text, Gazelli Art House, London

Breeze, Pear Tree Open Gallery, London

2020

Art is your Human Right, Petworth

House, Petworth

2019

Gardens of Ideas, Frestonian Gallery
Statement Piece: Recent Acquisitions and Consignments, The Missing Plinth

2018

Mono, Velorose Gallery

2015

Gradi di libertà: dove e come nasce la nostra possibilità di essere liberi, MAMBO – Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Bologna

2013

The National College of Arts, Pakistan. British Council touring exhibition

2012

Somerset House, London
Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), London

2011

Olympic Poster Commission LOCOG, London

2010

Life of the Mind, curated by Bob and Roberta Smith, The New Art Gallery, Walsall
I Should be in Charge, Installation Hayward Gallery façade, London

2009

Altermodern: Tate Triennial 2009,

Tate Britain, London

The Festival, South Bank Center, London

Paul Thek in the Context of Contemporary Art, ZKM, Karlsruhe
Monument to Harry Farr, Kusseners Gallery, Antwerp

2007

Hearing voices seeing things, Serpentine Gallery, London
The Apathy Workshop, Home Live Arts Project Battersea Park, London
Shortlisted for Fourth Plinth Commission Exhibition, National Gallery, London
Art U Need, Public Art Project Commissions East, various locations, UK

2006

Family Art Project, Island Six, Shanghai

2004

Plazasuite, Union Gallery, London
Master Blaster, Ode to Anti Social Aesthetics, BARD College, New York
Voodoo Shit, Hales Gallery, London

2003

The Bremen Conference, in association with GAK, Bremen
Independence, South London Art Gallery, London
Kick it till it hurts, VTO Gallery, Manchester
Bag Lady, Cell Project Space, London

2002

Sidewinder, CIMA Gallery, Calcutta

Sitting Tenants, Lotta Hammer Gallery, London

Air Guitar, Milton Keynes Gallery of Contemporary Art, London

Art after Art, Neues Museum Weserburg, Bremen

2001

Artists World, CCAC, San Francisco
The Other Britain, Tecla Sala, Hospitalat, Barcelona
Record Collection, VTO Gallery and International 3, Manchester
12 Internet Projects, commissioned by the BBC, The Lux Center, London
Death, The Round House, Camden, London
Big Blue at Century City, Tate Modern, London

2000

Landscape, British Council, ACC Galerie, Germany; Centro Cultural del Conde Duque
British Art-Installation, Diehl Vorderwuelbecke Galerie, Berlin
Waiting, Mjellby Konstgard
Intelligence, New British Art 2000, Tate Gallery, Millbank, London
Insanity Benefit, Vilma Gold, London

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS (SELECTED)

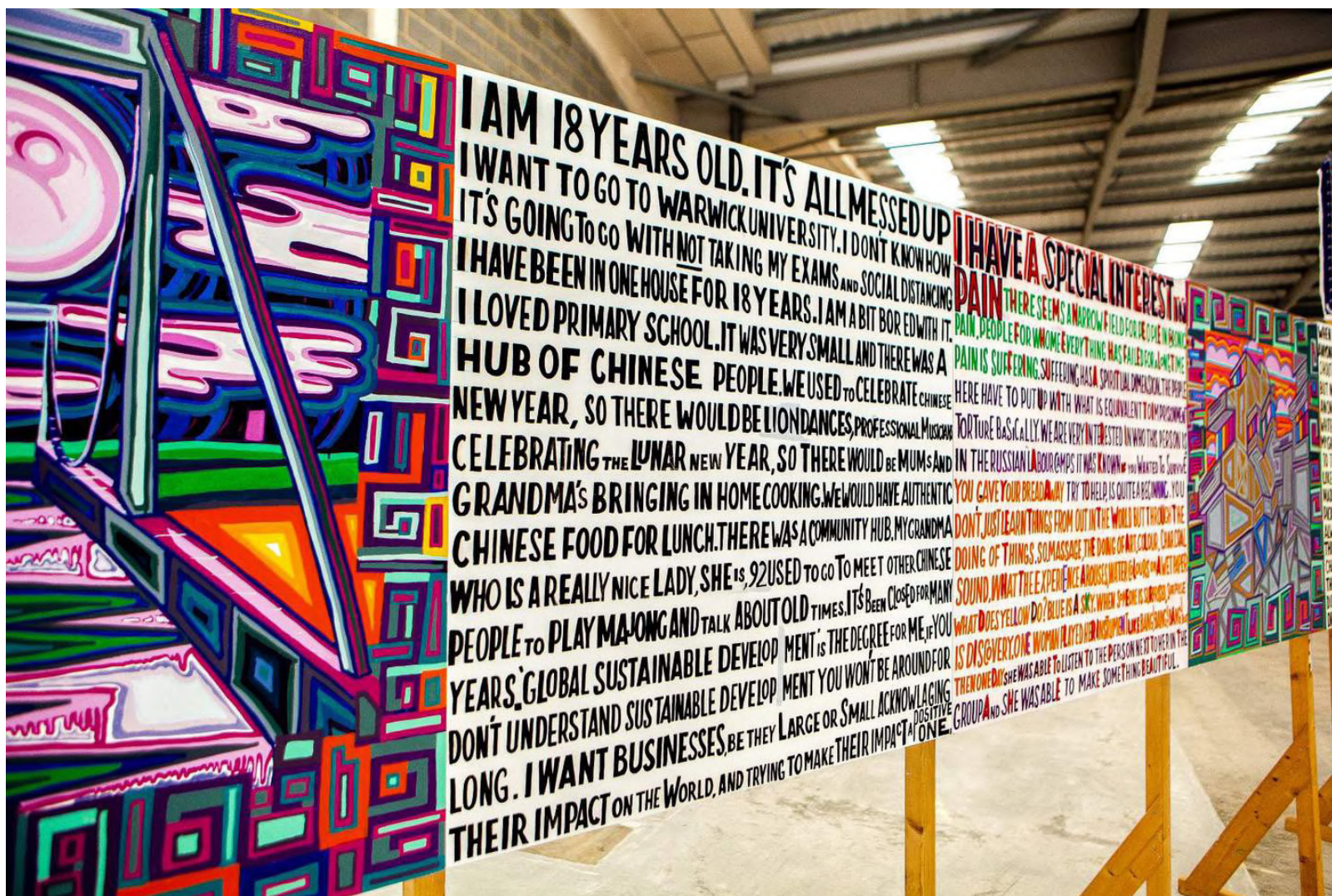
Tate Collection, London
Parliamentary Art Collection, London
Amgueddfa Cymru National Museum of Wales, Cardiff
Arts Council Collection, London
British Council Collection, London

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Sammlung Fiede, Aschaffenburg
Southampton City Museum & Art Gallery, South-
ampton
The New Art Gallery Walsall, Walsall
Goss Michael Foundation, Dallas





Thamesmead Codex è un'opera di Bob and Roberta Smith, attualmente esposta alla Tate Modern di Londra, che celebra le voci e la comunità locale di Thamesmead, Londra. Dal 2019 al 2020 l'artista ha parlato con diversi residenti locali. Ha poi trasformato le loro conversazioni in 24 cartelli dipinti presentando queste interviste in una versione moderna di un "codex", termine antico che indica un manoscritto o un libro. L'opera documenta la storia e l'identità di Thamesmead e delle sue comunità, registra i ricordi del passato e le speranze per un futuro. Accanto a questa registrazione dei pensieri e delle esperienze delle persone, Smith include scene paesaggistiche vivide e futuristiche, simili proprio alle pagine illustrate di un codice.

Thamesmead Codex exhibited at the Tate Modern in London is a work by Bob and Roberta Smith that celebrates the voices and local community of Thamesmead, London. From 2019 to 2020, the artist spoke to a variety of local residents. He then transformed their conversations into the 24 painted signs, presenting these interviews in a modern version of a 'codex', an ancient term for a manuscript or book. The work documents the history and identity of Thamesmead and its communities, records memories of the past and hopes for a future. Alongside this recording of people's thoughts and experiences, Smith includes vivid, futuristic landscape scenes, similar to the illustrated pages of a codex.



The Word Observatory
Von Bartha, Copenhagen, 2022

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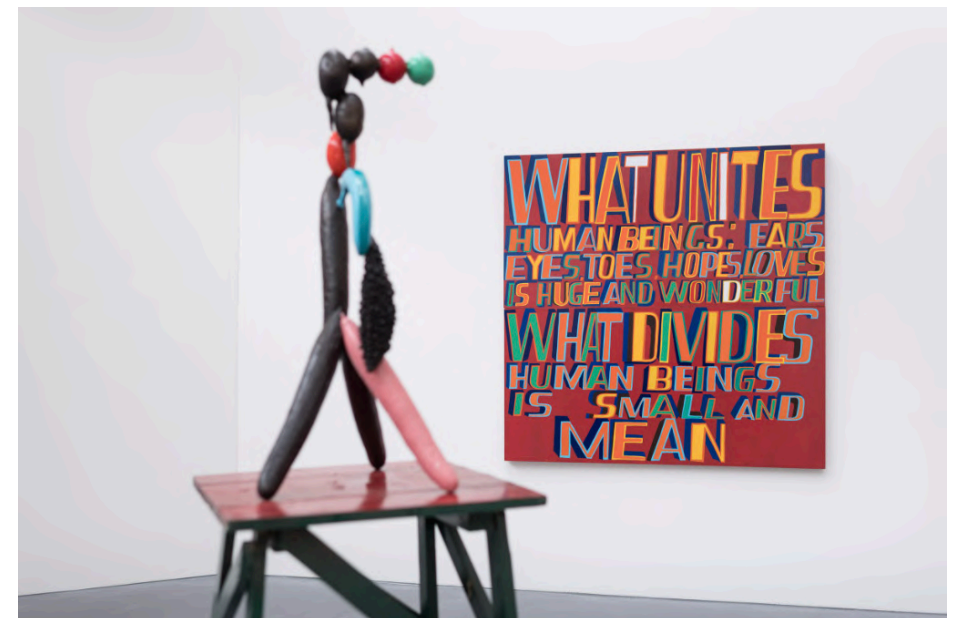
Look, Listen, Make Things, The Harris Museum, Preston, 2021



Look, Listen, Make Things, The Harris Museum, Preston, 2021



The Whole World is an Art School, Von Bartha, Basel, 2018





Art Makes Children Powerful, Yorkshire Sculpture Park's National Arts Education Archive, 2015





Art Amnesty, MoMA PS1, New York, 2014



Make art not war, 1997
vernice su tavola
paint on wood
150 x 150 cm
TATE Collection

BOB AND ROBERTA SMITH

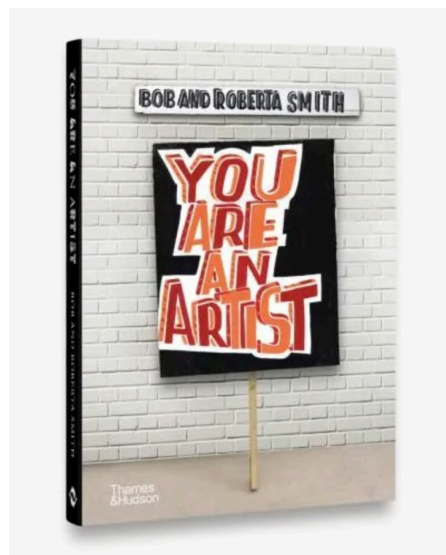
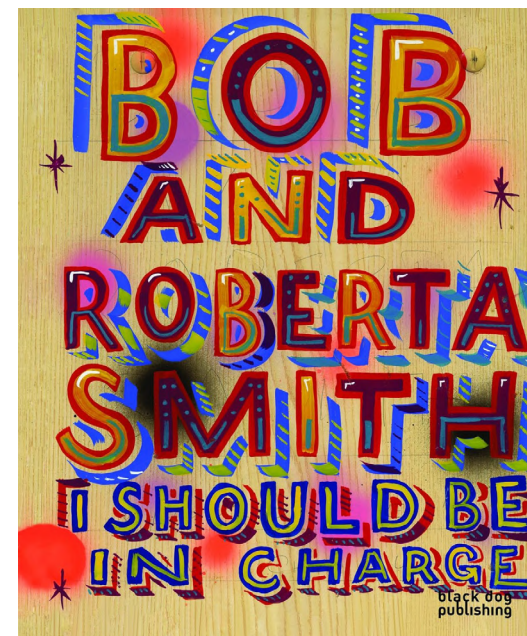
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Bob and Roberta Smith
Art makes people powerful
2023
192 pages
ISBN 0711265399

Bob and Roberta Smith
I should be in charge
2011
240 pages
ISBN 1907317260



Bob and Roberta Smith
You are an artist
2020
168 pages
ISBN 0500239932