Ierimonti Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of “Look Very Closely”, an exhibition featuring some of the most representative works of Marcel Duchamp and Gianfranco Baruchello.

Since the Sixties Gianfranco Baruchello has worked with different materials and a multidisciplinary approach, using a variety of media and techniques including drawings, writings and assemblage. *Objets trouvés* and writings, images and words alphabets, archived and catalogued in personal collections with a Duchampian attitude (“I have set up an archive a rhyming book of the culture I have been using it now for quite some times objects men books hypotheses etiologies fables techniques scores electrical household appliances classified structures in perfect disorder”) are fundamental in Baruchello’s artistic project.

With his artistic vocabulary derived from prefab images catalogues belonging to the everyday universe, Baruchello creates miniature worlds where he suggests delicate mental associations. Duchamp used to say that his ambition was “to put painting once again at the service of the mind”: as for Baruchello images become thinkable, in an art that is no longer subject to the aesthetic beauty, but that is the beauty of indifference. The mental component is always accompanied by a thinner one, reminiscent of the subconscious in a multiplicity of meanings that are hidden in a work like the Large Glass. If Duchamp here highlights the refusal of the concept of retinal painting, with the readymade he takes the next step, elevating everyday objects to works of art. And through these subjects that are elevated to a work of art, Duchamp begins to make a series of short circuits of language, where the word begins to exist as a separate entity from its meaning.

The multiple identities and meanings of the artworks presented forces us to “look very closely”, as Duchamp used to say about Baruchello’s work.

**Henri-Robert-Marcel Duchamp** was born July 28, 1887, near Blainville, France. In 1904, he joined his artist brothers, Jacques Villon and Raymond Duchamp-Villon, in Paris, where he studied painting at the Académie Julian until 1905. Duchamp’s early works were Post-Impressionist in style. He exhibited for the first time in 1909 at the Salon des Indépendants.
and the Salon d’Automne in Paris. His paintings of 1911 were directly related to Cubism but emphasized successive images of a single body in motion. In 1912, he painted the definitive version of *Nude Descending a Staircase*; this was shown at the Salon de la Section d’Or of that same year and subsequently created great controversy at the Armory Show in New York in 1913.

Duchamp’s radical and iconoclastic ideas predated the founding of the Dada movement in Zurich in 1916. By 1913, he had abandoned traditional painting and drawing for various experimental forms, including mechanical drawings, studies, and notations that would be incorporated in a major work, *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* (1915–23; also known as *The Large Glass*). In 1914, Duchamp introduced his *ready-mades*—common objects, sometimes altered, presented as works of art—which had a revolutionary impact upon many painters and sculptors. In 1915, Duchamp traveled to New York, where his circle included Katherine Dreier and Man Ray, with whom he founded the Société Anonyme in 1920, as well as Louise and Walter Arensberg, Francis Picabia, and other avant-garde figures.

After playing chess avidly for nine months in Buenos Aires, Duchamp returned to France in the summer of 1919 and associated with the Dada group in Paris. In New York in 1920, he made his first motor-driven constructions and invented Rose Sélavy, his feminine alter ego. Duchamp moved back to Paris in 1923 and seemed to have abandoned art for chess but in fact continued his artistic experiments. From the mid-1930s, he collaborated with the Surrealists and participated in their exhibitions. Duchamp settled permanently in New York in 1942 and became a United States citizen in 1955. During the 1940s, he associated and exhibited with the Surrealist émigrés in New York, and in 1946 began *Etant donnés: 1. la chute d'eau 2. le gaz d'éclairage*, a major assemblage on which he worked secretly for the next 20 years. He died October 2, 1968, in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France.

**Gianfranco Baruchello** was born in Livorno in 1924. After studying for a law degree in Rome in 1959 he turned all his attention to art.

The beginnings of his research were marked by the paintings *Altro Tracce* (Other Traces - white canvases crisscrossed by a tangle of black lines) and a series of assemblages of found objects (amongst which Cimiteri d’opinione, Cemeteries of Opinion, 1962), in line with the school of Nouveau Réalisme.

In 1962 he started to paint large canvases, in which he was already developing his first universe of images: in general white surfaces, crossed by just a few marks or uncertain forms, by signs – lines, words – blotted with red lead.

Fascinated by French culture (he did not miss out on the exhibitions of Burri and Twombly staged at the time), he met Sebastien Matta and Alain Jouffroy in Paris. A close friend of Marcel Duchamp (they met in 1962) Baruchello took his artistic philosophy close to heart.

He took part in the group exhibition New Realists organised by Pierre Restany at the Sidney Janis Gallery in New York, coming into contact with pop art and American abstract expressionism.

In the Sixties his miniaturised painting on large white surfaces emerged, comprising signs, letters and drawings with references to symbols of consumer and television society.

He accomplished his first solo at Galleria La Tartaruga in Rome in 1963 and started to work with the Schwarz gallery in Milan and in 1964 held his first solo at the Cordier & Ekstrom gallery in New York. This was the period of his first Plexiglas works, consisting of two layers
of Plexiglas over bases of cardboard and the first openable wooden objects painted and drawn on the inside.

He started to work on Verifica incerta (Verification Uncertain), a film produced in collaboration with Alberto Grifi: Baruchello bought an enormous quantity of cast-off film, above all 1950s American advertising footage, and made a montage by joining the film clips together with sticky tape.

Between 1965 and 1968 the artist – who continued to exhibit prolifically in Italy and abroad – also devoted himself to other artistic activities, among them the publication *Why Duchamp: An Essay on Aesthetic Impact* (1985). The Fondazione Baruchello, located in his former home-studio and farm in Via di S. Cornelia on the Roman hills, has the intent to carry out research activities on contemporary art.

Dating from 2013 is the Vice versa exhibition project for the Italian pavilion, curated by Bartolomeo Pietromarchi, at the 55th Venice Biennale, in the exhibition by Massimiliano Gioni on the Palazzo Enciclopedico (The Encyclopaedic Palace).

Works by the artist are in important museums and film and video collections all around the world.