

McNamara Art Projects in collaboration with Sadie Coles HQ is delighted to present the first solo exhibition of work by Borna Sammak in Asia. The presentation features seven new embroidered paintings by the New York-based artist, in which he amalgamates found images and objects into near-abstract compositions. Teeming with expropriated signs and symbols, Sammak's works constitute an expanded mode of painting: the processes of collage, embroidery and assemblage are themselves interwoven and overlaid to produce a dynamic whole.

Sammak's new works build upon his long-term use of everyday stuff – the form of readymade objects, found texts – to construct a fluid and layered visual language. In a number of works, he has woven sections of beach towels and army jackets into swirling clusters that simultaneously evoke gestural painting and the graphic patterning of camouflage designs.



In much of the artist's work, camouflage functions dually as an aesthetic reference (a visual formula lifted from everyday life) and a metaphor for art's own capacity to dissemble and conceal. Indeed, Sammak's works frequently disguise everyday matter as something other than itself: printed beach towels are broken into semi-legible motifs – at once the vestiges of functional objects and corpuscles of brilliant colour.

Elsewhere, Sammak's references to contemporary reality are more pointed. The image of a flattened Union Jack umbrella hovers as an embroidered emblem, rendered in black and grey over a field of monochrome yellow bordered by a dark blue line – a composition that invokes the appearance of temporary street signage or panel of a comic. Here, however, the absence of any kind of text, instruction or actor robs the sign of its usual declarative import. The solitary image remains as an open-ended – perhaps elegiac – statement.

In contrast to the stray motif of the umbrella, another work draws upon the history of Persian carpets in its cornucopia-style array of animal and floral motifs, intersecting incongruously with sections of towel containing, among other things, beer logos. The supposed timelessness of the decorative arts is contaminated – or cross-pollinated – with the detritus of twenty-first-century capitalism.

Borna Sammak (b. 1986, Philadelphia, PA) lives in Brooklyn. He obtained a BFA from New York University (2011). Solo exhibitions include those at American Medium, New York (2016), and JTT, New York (most recently 2018). His work has been included in group exhibitions including *Mad World*, Marciano Art Foundation (MAF), Los Angeles (2018); *Divided States of America*, The Center, New York (2017); *OVERPOP*, Yuz Museum, Shanghai (2016, curated by Jeffrey Deitch and Karen Smith), *Transmission Legacies of the Television Age*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia (2015), and *Analogital*, Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Salt Lake City (2013).