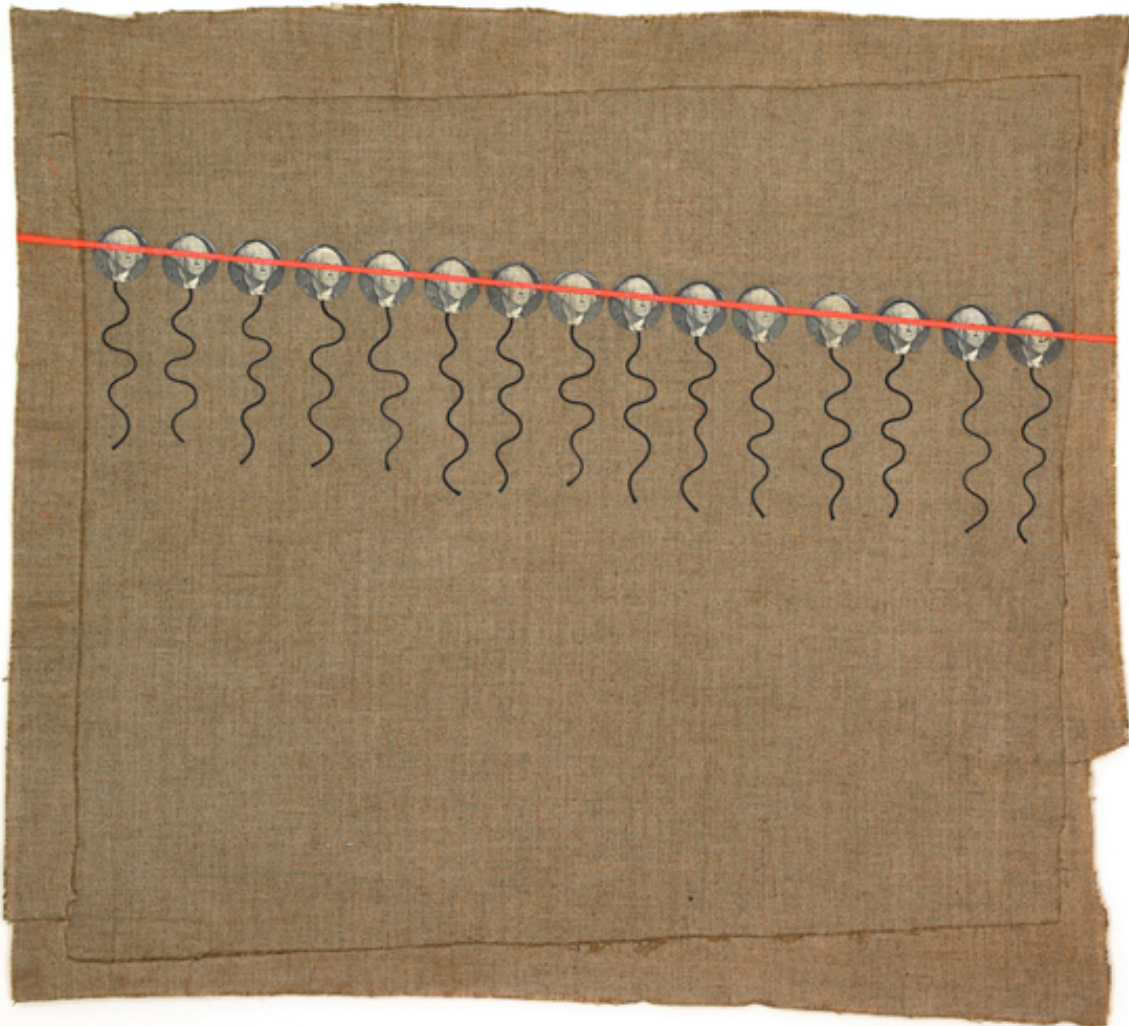


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Banned in the USA: Marc Blane's Outlawed Artwork Comes to London

By Ashitha Nagesh



Value Portfolio—2013—61 x 61cm—Belgian linen, acrylic paint, US currency (hand cut), nylon fishing line

An exhibition of Marc Blane's controversial banknote works, "Financial Statements," is to open on November 20 at Gallery Petit. This will be the first time the works are shown in the UK.

In the process of making the constructions, Blane has defaced several American banknotes. The head of George Washington is cut out of one-dollar bills and

arranged in such a manner as to resemble sperm. In the United States, the defacement or destruction of any American currency is a crime punishable with 3 to 6 months in prison, a \$5,000 fine and the confiscation of the artworks.

However, the artist has yet to encounter trouble with the government. Instead he claims that he has mainly faced adversity from established galleries in America, who are reluctant to exhibit these works due to the associated risk of arrest and confiscation.

“I haven’t had any problems with the authorities. I have had problems showing this work in U.S. based galleries due to the associated risk of exhibiting this work. I would like this work to implode within the Art World, in an educational and very soft way.” Blane told ARTINFO UK.

Brooklyn-born Marc Blane was originally involved with the “Downtown Scene” of New York’s East Village in the 1980s and a graduate of the Cooper Union School of Art. Although his contemporaries included Jeff Koons, Jenny Holzer and Jean-Michel Basquiat, his work was noticeably different from all of theirs. He explains, “what I do is a conceptualized form of Folk Art. I am inspired by current historical changes that shape my neighborhood, my life and culture.” His studio is currently based in the Wall Street area of downtown Manhattan, New York’s financial district.