

LOUVRE

Press release

Musée du Louvre
Salle de la Maquette

June 14, 2006 -
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J.S. Copley,
Watson and the Shark,
© Detroit Institute of
Arts



Mike Kelley, *Day is Done*, 2005
© Gagosian Gallery, New York

as media partners



Visitor information

Place

Musée du Louvre, Sully Wing,
Moats of the Medieval Louvre, Salle
de la Maquette

Hours

Open daily except Tuesdays from 9
a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and until 9:30 p.
m. on Wednesdays and Fridays

Further information

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www.louvre.fr

Mike Kelley

This exhibition was made possible thanks to the generous support of The Broad Art Foundation and with additional support from Gagosian Gallery.

Scheduled to coincide with the presentation of “American Artists and the Louvre”, the Museum has invited the American artist Mike Kelley to create a work.

A major figure of the contemporary art scene, Mike Kelley wears many hats: sculptor, performance and installation artist, musician, art critic. The multimedia installation conceived for the Louvre, combining films, music, and literary texts, is built around gripping images of two celebrated paintings by American artists.

Mike Kelley today creates installations associating sound and animations of images with sculpture. His works involve the melding of familiar objects and materials which, through their juxtapositions, engender a reflection on themes ranging from history of art and politics to morality and sex.

Noble art and vernacular traditions, universal history and minor narratives, popular culture, psychological theories and personal recollections, the unusual multiplicity of Mike Kelley's sources of inspiration and his many collaborations with other artists convey his critical conception of art and culture.

At the Louvre, Mike Kelley presents a video installation involving projections on multiple screens of images of two paintings: *Watson and the Shark* (1777) by John Singleton Copley and *Recitation* (1891) by Thomas Wilmer Dewing, which the artist first discovered at the Detroit Institute of Arts in his youth. These films are accompanied by music as well as excerpts from poetic and literary texts. The artist thus plays with the contrast between a dramatic and violent scene and a symbolic and strange atmosphere. The two paintings share a color scheme dominated by shades of green, whose symbolic connotations have fascinated Kelley for some time. The installation is founded on reconstructed memories, reinterpretations of the images and their visual codes. This is the first time that Mike Kelley has made use of images from the history of American painting.

Born in Detroit in 1954, Mike Kelley lives and works in Los Angeles.

Exhibition curator:

Marie-Laure Bernadac, chief curator, special advisor on contemporary art at the Louvre.

Assisted by Pauline Guélaud

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