

KENDALL KOPPE

MICHAEL BÜHLER-ROSE

True Love Today / Today Love True

21 May—19 July 2025

Michael Bühler Rose's *Verso* series exists as a compendium of object biographies which reveal the fascinating histories of trade and display for a set of carefully selected artworks. It takes as its horizon the kind of postwar contemporary art that exists in liminality in the minds of anyone with more than a glancing interest in it.

When we are confronted by an image we think we already know, we experience it as an apparition that cannot be contained by its surface: the artwork is not fully present. We see it as a mirage, something sped up by the pace of assumed recognition. By notionally flipping an artwork - turning it to face the wall, exposing traces of its physical and cultural production - Bühler Rose aims to reconstitute the substance of the object, presenting us with a set of interiorities that slow down our encounter and solicit our proper attention, our curiosity. There is a denudation of the familiar, a breach of privacy that appeals to our parasocial interest in the construction of fame. The abstract, apparitional processes of exchange and capital accumulation turn in on themselves, creating the conditions for a renewed engagement which is sensual and grounded.

Works in the *Verso* series are like Byzantine icons, skilfully crafted and resonant with the sheen of particular materials. Given the importance of standardised form to each, Bühler Rose's production process is one that parallels the manufacture of icons very well. He searches online, sourcing images of the back of artworks through auction houses and catalogued sales, often grabbing them from condition reports. These are worked up as blueprints and sent to an intarsia workshop in Mysore where artisans meticulously cut and assemble inlays from tropical woods chosen for their textural and tonal properties. Stretchers, canvas, staples and nails; typed labels, handwritten annotations, calligraphic signatures and inked stamps become a pattern of interlacing shapes, flattened out and simultaneous with the picture plane.

Intarsia is a personally symbolic medium for Bühler Rose, bringing together time spent in India studying orthodox Hindu/Vaishnava ritualism, with an appreciation for the Gubbio Studiolo, a room of trompe l'oeil intarsia panels installed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Studiolo interiors are associated with Renaissance Italy and were devoted to the intimate contemplation of treasured objects, talismans representing knowledge, wealth, sophistication. Deciding to work with intarsia, Bühler Rose produced several *Studies for a Studiolo*, often depicting collections of books, records, trophy possessions and other paraphernalia that describe his hinterland as a post-punk obsessive.

Initially, the *Verso* series took its cues from ideas associated with the Pictures generation who, during the 1970s and 80s, were at the forefront of pushing appropriationist and simulationist techniques as tactics to trouble authorship as a secure point of origin. As a conceptual touchstone, Sherrie Levine's 'rephotographs' of illustrations in art books - *After Walker Evans (1981)* for example - prefigure Bühler Rose's auction site downloads as instances of what Rosalind Krauss labelled 'piracy' in her mid-80s essay *The Originality of the Avant-Garde*. Piracy had some critical currency in the formulation of Nicholas Bourriaud's millennial take on 'postproduction', but to speak of it now seems quaint, artisanal and human given the way images and information proliferate algorithmically. It is a nostalgic term, a pre Y2K technique that speaks to a time of creative possibility opened up by digital technologies and the coming maturation of the World Wide Web.

For this exhibition, Bühler Rose has chosen to show works which reference Warhol and On Kawara. We can predict pretty accurately what an On Kawara date painting would look like. Rule-bound, date

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paintings have strict self-similarity, but flipped, they assert their subjectivity, the personal journey, the body beneath the uniform. Warhol is anticipated by his persona, the sheer scale and range of his outputs and market value – a \$195 million price point in 2022 for *Shot Sage Blue Marilyn* (1964) from the collection of Thomas and Doris Ammann. In an age when image dissipates in the face of performative connections, Bühler Rose's *Verso* series follows the tracks and uses the integrity of the object to formulate a new genre of cabinet works and conversation pieces.

Fiona Jardine, 2025

Kendall Koppe is delighted to announce Michael Bühler-Rose's first exhibition with the gallery and in the UK, True Love Today | Today True Love. Continuing our series of exchange, collaboration and expanded dialogues between galleries, colleagues and artists - the guest exhibition takes place at Carlos/Ishikawa, London (Unit 7).

Michael Bühler-Rose (American, b. 1980) lives and works in between New York, NY and Mysore, India. He received his BFA from School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston at Tufts University, a Fulbright, India and his MFA from University of Florida, Gainesville.

Solo exhibitions include: Stems Gallery, Brussels; New Discretions, New York; Andrew Rafacz, Chicago; Carroll and Sons, Boston; Scaramouche, New York; Light Work, Syracuse and the Everson Museum, Syracuse. He was part of a two-person exhibition with A.A. Bronson at Nature Morte, Berlin, Germany in 2013. Recently he has exhibited with Asya Geisberg Gallery, New York; 601Artspace New York; Wasserman Projects, Detroit; Sean Horton, New York; Jimei x Arles, Jimei; Kunstinstituut Melly, Rotterdam, NL amongst others.

His work is included in public and private collections such as the Museum of Art and Photography, Bangalore; Ford Foundation, New York; Fidelity Investment, Chennai; Light Work Syracuse, NY; Harvard Fogg Museum, Cambridge; Sammlung Goetz, Munich; SK Stiftung Kultu, Die Photographische Sammlung, Cologne.

Fiona Jardine is an artist and writer who holds a teaching and research position in the School of Design, Glasgow School of Art. She has produced written responses to artworks, exhibitions and practice for artists and designers including Joanne Tatham & Tom O'Sullivan, Laura Aldridge, James Rigler, Nick Evans, Erica Eyres and Elizabeth Price, co-curating Price's recent exhibition, 'Underfoot' (2022), with Panel and The Hunterian, University of Glasgow.

Works List — Right to Left

1. *Verso (On Kawara, Dec. 21, 1995)*, 2025, Wood Intarsia/Inlay: Rosewood, Nelee, Honna, Slate Matti, Kadyakshe, Champa and Akshay woods, 20.3 x 25.4 x 3.8 cm, 8 x 10 x 1 1/2 in
2. *Verso (On Kawara, Dec. 11, 1975)*, 2025, Wood Intarsia/Inlay: Slate Matti, Honna, Champa, Light Champa, Rosewood and Satin woods, 77 x 57.1 x 3.8 cm, 30 1/4 x 22 1/2 x 1 1/2 in
3. *Verso (Andy Warhol, Candy Box (True Love), 1984)*, 2025, Wood Intarsia/Inlay: Padauk, Kadyakshe, Nelee, Orange Fruit, Mukurche, Honna, Slate matti, Champa, Akshay woods, 34.2 x 26.7 x 3.8 cm, 13 1/2 x 10 1/2 x 1 1/2 in
4. *Verso (On Kawara, Jan. 19, 1982)*, 2025, Wood Intarsia/Inlay: Slate matti, Kadyakshe, Rosewood, Matti, Champa and Satin woods, 33.7 x 26.3 x 3.8 cm, 13 1/4 x 10 3/8 x 1 1/2 in
5. *Verso (Andy Warhol, Monkey (Toy Painting), 1983)*, 2025, Wood Intarsia/Inlay: Padauk, Pine, Slate Matti, Rosewood, Champa and Jackfruit woods, 40.6 x 51.7 x 3.8 cm, 16 x 20 3/8 x 1 1/2 in

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