



**Marco Maggi**

**INITIALISM  
(From Obscurantism to Enlightenment)**

September 12 - November 16, 2019

Josée Bienvenu is pleased to present INITIALISM (From Obscurantism to Enlightenment), Marco Maggi's 9th solo exhibition with the gallery. The show will revolve around a site-specific installation, a slow itinerary from obscurity to enlightenment. Upon entering the space, one can detect foundations or ruins of possible drawings: initials on the threshold that separates the visual arts from blindness. Ignitions of drawings grow on the floor and walls of the gallery space. They seem like hints for a treasure hunt, an escape room to challenge the viewer. During the initial walk, one will not be able to locate all the colored particules or detect the totality of the fragments. The only information will be a succession of details and approximations: initials of a text that no one can read in its integrality. After closely examining four walls, the public is invited to the brightness of a cabinet of drawings.

"Initialism is the farewell of the written word: reading a message that only includes initials feels like walking through the ruins of the Roman Empire. We are condemned to write shorter and shorter to understand less and less. At first, abbreviations were clear and recognizable: CIA, FBI, POTUS, DC, GPS, NYC, AM, PM, FM, ATM, ETC... More significative and more confusing is the initialization of entire sentences: ROFL, HTH, TBC, IMHO, YW, OMG, LMK, LOL, ETA. Rolling On the Floor Laughing, Hope That Helps, To Be Continued, In My Humble Opinion, You're Welcome, Oh My God, Let Me Know, Laughing Out Loud, Estimated Arrival Time...

Submerged in the digital world we abandon the three senses that resist online travel: taste, hear and touch. In this impoverished context, our vocabulary is particularly affected: Words lose letters every day: abbreviations, acronyms, leet-speak, shorthand, truncation: all strategies to save time and occult meaning, simplifying communication in order to be more and more obscure. Spelling initials is undoubtedly the most radical proposal in tweets, chats, instant messages, etc.. If the richness of language and vocabulary was a basic condition to conceive and formulate precise ideas, the "jivarization" of the dictionary will shrink our heads. The initial point of a drawing is very difficult to locate. In a few years, abstract drawing might replace initialism to become the preferred language of the media and social networks"

(Marco Maggi, 2019)

Born in Montevideo, Uruguay in 1957, Marco Maggi lives and works in New Paltz, New York. His solo exhibition, O Papel é Inocente, was recently on view at the Museu Brasileiro da Escultura (MuBE), São Paulo, BR. He represented Uruguay at the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015. Select exhibitions include: Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas (2017); Courtauld Institute of Art at Somerset House, London (2016); The Morgan Library & Museum, New York (2015); Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, BR (2012); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2008); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2007); Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC (2006); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2005); Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2003); Fifth Gwangju Biennial, KR (2004); VIII Havana Biennial, CU (2003); 25th São Paulo Biennial, São Paulo, BR (2002).