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## GILBERT & GEORGE

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### LONDON PICTURES

PARIS DEBELLEYME

13 Apr 2012 - 26 May 2012

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Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is delighted to present a selection of Gilbert & George's most recent pictures in its Paris gallery space. LONDON PICTURES, a series of 292 pictures, is the result of a long-standing collection of newspaper posters that have dominated current affairs over many years.

The titles of the pictures correspond to words picked out by the artists, repeated in red in each subdivision of the image like a slogan. These short sentences of three to five words bring to mind modern urban western life, and the layout of these pictures, in this way, insists on the repetitive nature of the phenomena concerned.

History repeating itself, an amalgam of local and world dramas and crises of society as a whole: these neutral words (*Addict, Cyclist, Hate...*) become the core of all tensions, not only between citizens themselves but also with their environment. These household notions become shocking sentences, a testimony decrying the malaise of their contemporaries.

In addition to the narratives, Gilbert & George are themselves spectators and actors central to their own art, appearing in the LONDON PICTURES in a hazy, almost ghostly manner. Unflinching watchdogs of their urban habitat, they incarnate memory and the passage of time: the History and stories that surround and submerge us all.

The journalistic description, exempt of moral code, is precisely what brings Michael Bracewell to speak of an urban drama, re-enacted without judgement, in the form of a *great visual novel*.

By giving us, in their art, the messages and the images of their surrounding environment, Gilbert & George are—and for many decades have been—active eyewitnesses of the evolution of Western society.

Gilbert, born in the Italian Dolomites in 1943, and George, born in Devon, England in 1942, both art students, met in 1967 at St Martin's School of Art in London.

A fully illustrated catalogue with an essay by novelist and cultural critic, Michael Bracewell accompanies the exhibition. Opening on April the 14th from 6 to 9 pm