

DANESE COREY

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Villains and Superheroes

Works on Paper by Simone Bianchi

January 9 – February 7, 2015

Reception: Thursday, January 8, 6-8 p.m.

Danese/Corey is proud to present an exhibition of drawings and paintings on paper by Simone Bianchi, an acknowledged master of the art of the comic book. Born in 1972, Bianchi lives in Lucca, Italy, where he works exclusively with Marvel comics. This is Mr. Bianchi's first exhibition in New York.

Since gaining prominence in the US in the mid to late 1800s, comic books have played a significant role in the lives of children and adults alike. Visual narratives featuring characters endowed with moral and physical powers reference both classical mythology and biblical villains and heroes. As early as 1960, Warhol's *Superman* and later, Lichtenstein's *Drowning Girl*, 1963, employed comic book imagery, and by extension, confirmed its validity as both art and cultural phenomenon. By providing a means to reintroduce the figure into American art, the comic book added measurably to the emergence of Pop Art and generated a radical departure from the hegemony of Abstract Expressionism.

Simone Bianchi has received worldwide recognition for his superbly rendered, virtuoso command of his subject matter. He enlivens his characters with physical, emotional and psychological dimension, with supernatural powers and human flaws, with moral purpose and evil intention. From the dramatic and sensual depictions of Elektra, and the mysterious, valiant Batman, to the monstrous energy of Wolverine and the horrific portrait of Dr. Doom, Bianchi elevates his characters to epic status and in the process, creates unforgettable images that transcend the formal conventions of the comic book genre. Ultimately, Bianchi's work exists as pure drawing – a brilliant, deftly executed figurative language that confirms his place in the evolving history of contemporary art.

Beginning in 1994, Bianchi worked with some of the most prestigious publishing houses in Italy. In 2000, while teaching at the International Comics School in Florence, an exhibition of Bianchi's works led to the publication of his first major portfolio *Echi* (Echoes). His second book, *The Art of Simone Bianchi*, was published in 2002 by Pavesio Productions. In 2004, the first volume of his sci-fi trilogy, *Ego Sum* was released by Pavesio, and at the 2005 Rome Comic Convention, he received the "Yellow Kid" award as the year's best Italian Comic Artist and Writer. That same year, Bianchi entered the US market, working for DC Comics on a number of projects. In October 2005, his third art book *Onirika* was published by Pavesio and debuted at the Lucca Comics Convention, for which he also painted the official poster.

In February 2006, Bianchi signed with Marvel, for which he continues to work exclusively. He has drawn stories featuring Wolverine, Thor, X-Force, Thanos, New Avengers and X-Men. In addition, he has made the covers for *Spiderman*, *Fantastic Four*, *Avengers*, *Deadpool*, *Black Panther*, and most recently *Star Wars*.

Bianchi's work has been exhibited at the Museo di Palazzo della Penna in Perugia, and the Galérie du 9ème Art in Paris (2009); the Chuck Jones Gallery, San Diego, CA, during the 2011 Comic-Con. And, in April 2012, a solo exhibition of his work was presented by CArt Gallery, Rome.

An online catalogue for this exhibition can be found at www.danesecorey.com. For further information, please contact Carol Corey or Jillian Brodie at 212/223-2227 or jillian@danese.com.