

Federico Solmi's Twisted Take on the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election

Karen Kedmey

ARTSY EDITORIAL

JUN 2ND, 2015 6:32 PM

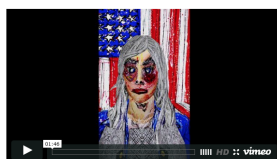


Federico Solmi, *American Circus (Installation view)*, 2014, 3 video paintings, acrylic paint on plexiglass, gold and silver leaf, video loop, time varies, 18 x 24 inches (each).

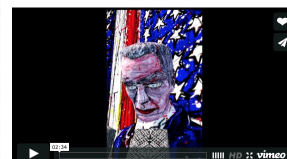
Richman Wall Street Tycoon (all 2014). Rendered with a combination of video game animation technology, acrylic paint, and gold and silver leaf on Plexiglas (these are objects as much as videos), the figures move in the stiff, staccato manner typical of video game characters. They stand against a background filled with an American flag, and before a bank of microphones, nodding their heads to acknowledge the cheers of an unseen crowd. Their faces are ghoul-like, complete with waxy-looking skin, dark bags under eyes that practically pop out of their heads, and curious crimson splashes that resemble splattered blood. The bright reds, whites, and blues that comprise the scene glow and pulse continuously.

Though each figure is shown as if preparing to give a speech, only the The Last President of the United States of America actually talks. In composing his short address, Solmi takes stock of what he sees as the subtext of presidential messaging, distills it down to its essence, and then foregrounds it—with frightening results. “My fellow Americans, we are the best country in the world,” says the candidate. “We are spreading freedom and liberty across our empire, and we will continue to rule the world thanks to our invincible military. Our currency is gaining strength. Our appetite for supremacy and authority endures, and because of this, the rest of the world is on their knees. God bless America.” My fellow Americans: get ready for 2016.

“Federico Solmi: American Circus” is on view at CONNERSMITH., Washington, D.C., May 18 – Jun. 15, 2015.



Federico Solmi
American Circus - The Next President of the United States of America, 2014
CONNERSMITH.



Federico Solmi
American Circus - The Last President of the United States of America, 2014
CONNERSMITH.



Federico Solmi
American Circus - Dick Richman Wall Street Tycoon, 2014
CONNERSMITH.

In keeping with the internet age, CONNERSMITH. has recently launched a new online exhibition series on its website. For its inaugural presentation, the gallery features three mixed media video works by Federico Solmi, who is known for using art as a platform for his satirical, at times scathing, commentary on contemporary society. In these recent pieces, he focuses on an event that lends itself all too well to criticism: the 2016 U.S. presidential race.

Each one of the videos is centered upon a political archetype, as indicated by Solmi's titles: The Next President of the United States of America, The Last President of the United States of America, and Dick