

# Franko B a Monument

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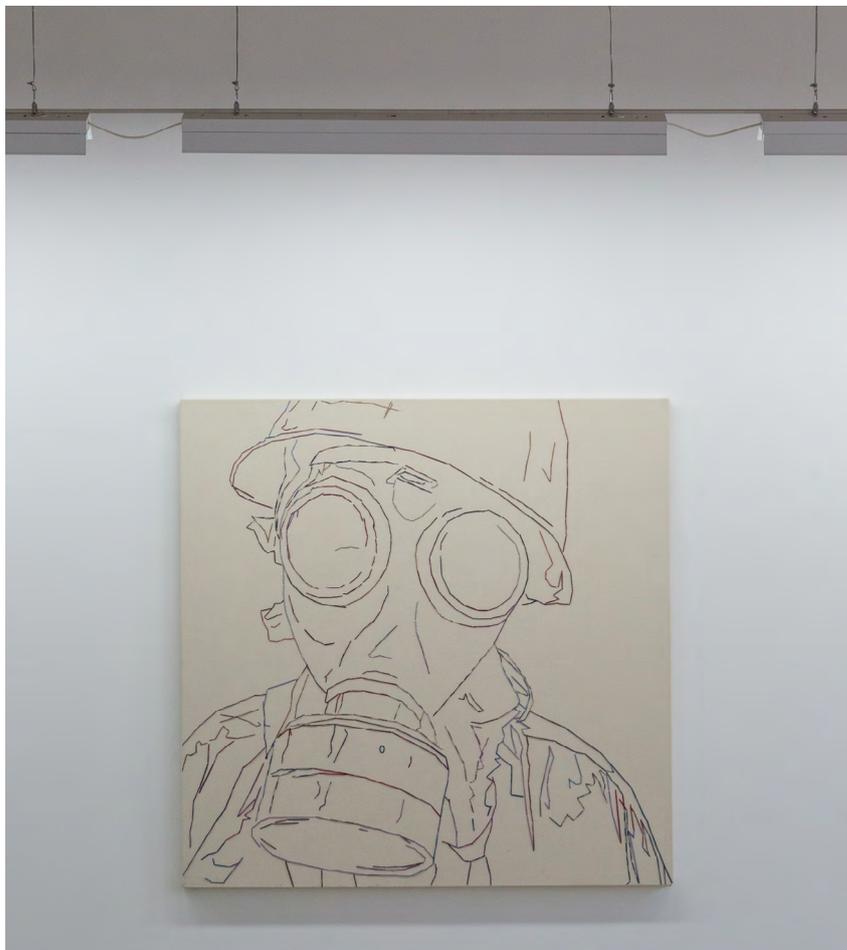
Franko B's work is about control, regardless of form and genre; control over one's body and over one's own life, against labels and rules that corrupt or commodify freedom. In a special series of work deploying flags and monuments, Franko B transfigures this concept into a narrative, reflecting on political constellations, institutions and powerholders that penetrate human lives.



Control of an institution over an individual is almost surreal, yet deeply embedded in reality, so much that we almost don't have the capacity to acknowledge it consciously. Most of the artificial political creations and corporations are as distant to us as mythical beings, as dogmas or things given by nature; things we both celebrate and mourn in stone. A society's collective belief in corporative promises render their presence untouchable, displayed only through symbols as proxies that compel us to believe, in real life, in what we would call God or Devil in religion. As individuals, as souls, we can only lose – only in times of crisis do these abstractions become corporeal and more often than not does their flesh prove as rotten, contagious, rather than holy.

Just as Franko B's early performances included letting his own blood out of his body and finding freedom in the act, the characters in his stitch drawings find connection in mutual pain, through a shared vulnerability brought upon them by war. In times of crisis, battle and trauma, a touch of another human being becomes a remedy, in the comfort of knowing that *you feel what I feel*. Franko B's representation of soldiers and victims of war are rightfully charged as homoerotic, but they are beyond the sexual. Stitches connect bodies and body parts, on canvas and in real life, shifting between embroidery and surgical suture.

As in life, as in Franko B's *a-Monument*, stones are immovable and they're blocking our view. Under the pretense of security and protection, they lock down all figuration and freedom, concealing it behind walls and logos, simplified shapes. One question that we're left with is that of fragility of canvases, compared and opposed to that of thin granite sheets.



Franko B makes drawings, installations, sculptures and performances, as well as works in many other mediums and disciplines. Over the years he has built up a sizable body of work and with performances at Tate Modern, Norwich Arts Centre and Venice Performance Art Week become internationally known. He lives and works in London and is Professor of Sculpture at l'Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti di Torino and a visiting lecturer at the Royal College of Art, London. His most recent solo shows include *Sleeping Beauty* (2017) at the Freud Museum in London, UK and *Love Letters* (2017) at Palazzo Sant'Elia, Palermo, Sicily.

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