

Jim Lambie

(Glasgow, UK, 1964)

Scottish artist Jim Lambie works on sculptures and installations directly inspired by pop culture and everyday life, often moving into the language of design. Using vivid colors and brilliant materials, he represents objects that are recognizable but reinterpreted in imaginative and oneiric fashion. Rock culture, above all English, dominates his imagination, where psychedelia plays a central role. In one of his most frequently recurring installations he covers the floors of galleries or museums with strips of colorful adhesive tape, forming abstract designs that cause the visitor to become lost within the space, confusing the work with the architectural structure. The very titles of his works are reworkings of verses of songs, strophes, and famous albums. Lambie, who is also a musician and DJ, came of age amid the music scene of the 1980s, a period when rock was open to other genres that were gradually emerging.

Avant-garde groups encompass every possible suggestion: new sounds, signs of everyday life, political struggle, art. Everything is put on the same plane, abandoning all types of formal hierarchy. The same psychedelia that, in the 1960s, had been experienced as a fundamental step in the spiritual reconstruction of the ego, is now seen as one of the possible experiences of life, like a game, an opening up of the mind. At the same time music closes in on itself, slowly developing a sort of autism that leads it to construct its own world of citations and fetishes. Lambie constructs a bridge with this imagination. His captivating, colorful, visionary sculptures include representations of t-shirts, constructions of chairs, and vinyl compositions—eyes open to different perceptions. *Metal Box*, one of his most famous works, can be presented individually or in groups that form large wall installations. The title is the same as that of the second album by Public Image Ltd, a bastion of post-punk experimentalism, where extreme sounds mix with cryptic texts. The album got its name from its packaging, literally a metal box, and its sound from the Veleno guitar, made completely out of aluminum. The layers that compose Lambie's work are also made of aluminum—painted and reflective—and are held together by folds at the corners, made strictly by hand, which reveal bright, synthetic colors. The work has the square shape of the L.P., and the folds recapture those produced by fans who spend hours leafing through stacks of records, looking for the rare find, the limited edition, the possible novelty to listen to and exchange with others. (EV)