



Recente Sorry's

A solo show by Guillaume Bijl

From May 22 until July 12, 2025

Lumen Travo Gallery, Amsterdam

In his latest series of *Sorry's installations* at Lumen Travo Gallery in Amsterdam, Guillaume Bijl (b. 1946, Antwerp) once again positions himself as the chronicler of our collective kitsch fantasies: the everyday absurdity of the West is carefully staged and lovingly mocked.



Guillaume Bijl, *Sorry* (detail), 2025

NEW

PORCELAINÉ
DE PARIS
FONDÉE EN 1973





Guillaume Bijl
Sorry (2025)
Mixed media installation
Variable dimensions

€ 24.000,-



NEW

PORCELAINÉ
DE PARIS
FONDÉE EN 1775



Guillaume Bijl
Sorry (2024)
Mixed media installation
Variable dimensions

€ 28.000,-



We're greeted by flamingos on plastic grass, an androgynous knock-off of Michelangelo's David flanked by a pineapple and a porcelain cat. A mannequin in fishnet stockings strikes a sultry pose among plastic miniature trees and mushrooms. At first glance, each element seems banal, over-the-top, perhaps even vulgar, but in Bijl's hands, these objects become shrines to banality. Together, they might even be considered altarpieces of consumer culture.

Bijl is a master of walking the tightrope between critique and complicity. We laugh at the clichés, but we also recognise our own desires in them. Because, let's be honest: who doesn't secretly love a dancing hula girl wiggling her skirt? And that other girl in red, under the glowing star, leaning against a folding screen as if presenting herself. It almost seems like a wink to the Red Light District. The gallery's glass window only adds to the ambiguity. As you pass by, the woman appears to lure you inside.



Guillaume Bijl, *Recente Sorry's*, installation view, Lumen Travo Gallery, 2025. Credits: Giovanni Nardi



Since the 1980s, Guillaume Bijl has been making his so-called *Sorry installations*, works with titles like *Sorry. A Fake Monument*, *Sorry. An Unimportant Performance*, *Sorry. A Tourist Information Stand*. Each *Sorry* piece is a surreal, humorous assemblage of found objects. With the title of the series, Bijl offers a kind of pre-emptive apology for daring to make work that isn't considered "serious" art.

Every time, he presents something too banal, too frivolous, too honest for what typically qualifies as "high" culture. What began as a playful diversion from his more realistic Transformation Installations, meticulously built replicas of driving schools, mattress shops and other mundane interiors, has grown into a catalogue of our shared desires, embarrassments, and aesthetic repressions.

Guillaume Bijl
Sorry (2025)
Mixed media installation
Variable dimensions

€ 15.000,-



Guillaume Bijl
Sorry (2025)
Mixed media installation
Variable dimensions

€ 15.000,-





Guillaume Bijl
Sorry (2025)
Mixed media installation
Variable dimensions

€ 15.000,-





Guillaume Bijl
Sorry (2025)
Mixed media installation
Variable dimensions

€ 27.000,-





These days, “sorry” rarely sounds like a real apology. It’s striking how far the word has drifted from its original meaning. We no longer say it because we’ve done something wrong, but because we might be inconveniencing someone. Because we’re ashamed of taking up space, or of liking something a bit odd, or of asking a question, or simply for being present. It’s become a kind of social lubricant, a word we throw in to ease discomfort, to seem polite, to appear more palatable, or simply out of habit.

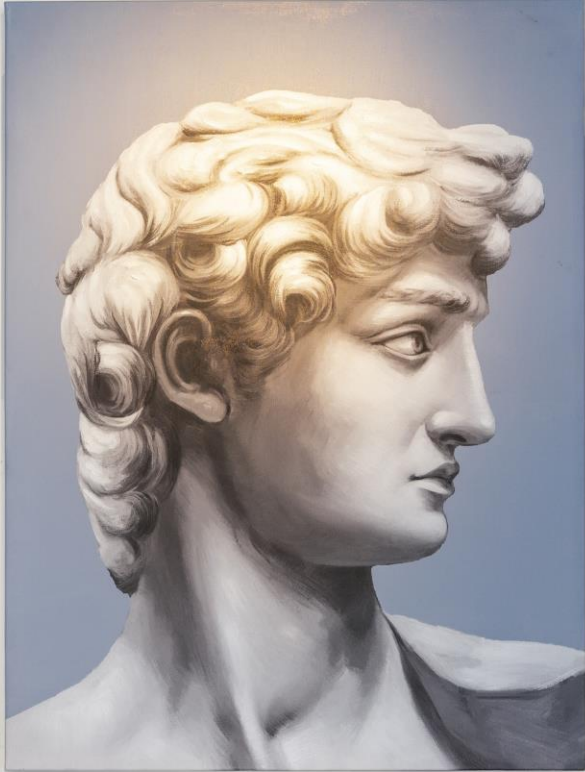
Bijl’s installations apologise in advance for their own existence: “sorry I’m kitsch”, “sorry I’m too much”, “sorry I’ve put something on a pedestal that no one dares admit they like”. It’s an ironic gesture, but not a cynical one. Secretly, we all find something in these constellations to be exciting, funny, or downright cute. His work reminds us that “bad taste” is part of being human, and thus inseparable from culture itself.

Words by Emily Van Driessen

PRINCESSE



PRINCESSE



“The word ‘sorry’ is a prototypical, cool word of this age. When, in 1987, I started compiling a number of absurd assemblages of existing objects, and thus made an abstraction, I was ‘being unfaithful’ to my own realistic form. As a result, I called those little works ‘Sorries’. Later on, I also made a number of larger, absurd installations, in which I consistently Insinuated the human figure in a surreal tableau. Those works became an absurd poetic extension of my oeuvre.”

Guillaume Bijl, 1991

Guillaume Bijl
Sorry (2025)
Mixed media installation
Variable dimensions

€ 24,000,-



Guillaume Bijl
Composition Trouvée (1991)
Mixed media installation
Variable dimensions
Unique work

€ 8.000,-



GUILLAUME BIJL

Born in Antwerp, Belgium, 1946 - 2025.

Guillaume Bijl (1946–2025) was known for his large-scale installations and visual realism. Since the late 1970s, Bijl created realistic décors using found objects, playing a pioneering role in the resurgence of the ready-made.

Bijl could be considered something of an anthropologist who did not research exotic overseas cultures, but instead worked between Antwerp and New York, Amsterdam and Paris, closely observing and mimicking Western life.

His practice was marked by a sharp observational lens and a unique blend of satire and sincerity. Bijl's work often reconstructed familiar environments—from driving schools to showrooms and casinos—within the context of an art gallery, blurring the lines between reality and fiction. By transforming the gallery into a setting that felt strangely familiar, Bijl invited visitors to question what is real, what is staged, and how cultural values are encoded in everyday settings.



Guillaume Bijl, portrait (2021)



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