

**Basel 15-20 June 2010
ARTBASEL 41 - VOLTA 6 – LISTE 15****PRESS RELEASE****RENATO MENEGHETTI
“INDIFFERENCE”****LOOK AT YOU IN YOUR INDIFFERENCE
THE ARTISTS LIKE TERSYTE**

These are days of great fervor for the art in Basel, a major event between Art Basel, Volta 6, Liste. Large spaces in Messeplatz, Helsekistrasse, Burgweg, are covered with white ceramic heads. They are laid on the ground, erected, except few overturned or dropped, recumbent. A cemetery. The instinct is to circumnavigate them. Brings out the awkwardness of someone who crosses the work for mistake, and embarrassed like walking on eggshells trying not to hurt and injure white heads: There are five types, from the maturity to childhood (the latter are a bit smaller), their faces were closed eyes in an expression contemplative which increases the defenseless.

“Tersyte yelled without control/ [...] the ugliest of men to have come to Ilium; he was crooked, lame in one foot, bent shoulders which narrowed into his chest [...] /.

Tersyte like the artist turns out to be the foil to Homer’s hero. The social extraction of Tersyte correspond to his moral baseness; the heroes stood at opposite side, half godlike beings, tall, beautiful, blonde and strong, the sheer essence of *Kalòs kai agathòs*, physical and moral perfection. Tersyte marks one of the first appearances of humble and alienated beings in western literature, he is the first character to emerge from the grey anonymity of common men, but this branding of infamy among Homer’s antiheroes provides an excuse for caricature, a grotesque and horribly ridiculous portrait of he who could not, and could never be, a hero. In the Art system of many, too many good artists become Tersyte. An artwork on the edge, giving a voice to the new Tersyte, the faceless people of the contemporary world. A creative path made up of 1000 ceramic heads through which visitors are forced to make their way in order to reach the exhibition inevitably breaking the sculptures. Through this the indifference and daily behaviour of the heroes of physical and moral perfection is shown. “Art – said Kubrik – remodels life, but it does not create it, it does not produce it”. The confines are evasive then between victim and executioner, between beggar and busy citizen, between artist and alienated person, between destruction and construction, or to say it in Kubric’s words, between life and art. The artist is an alienated person, a dreadful being who should be ignored, avoided and forgotten. Like *The Blind leading the Blind* by Bruegel, undernourished beggars, in rags lacking direction inexorably heading for the abyss, become the emblem of a humanity that can no longer see, no longer listen, mankind that runs, forgets, ignores. Of an indifferent humanity. Steal a head, passes through without cure them, break it, give free rein to your instincts and your own indifference. Your trying to avoid is only the way to circumvent the problem, but is short, you will click into irritation – trouble – annoyance – nuisance – disgust – badness – wickedness – perversion – evilness, soon to give a kick to an annoying head which obstructs the way. This is the attitude adopted daily by the individuals of the third millennium: The most absolute indifference for those who suffer, die, for those who surround us. For the Other. We are conscious - We think - We feel sorry about, but We are indifferent - We have ignored - We have avoided – We have elbowed our way through the crowd - We have kicked somebody – We even step on the shards that remain after destruction.

2002 - Indifference. Installation composed of 1000 heads of men, women, children made of fragile ceramic. Various size medium h. cm.22