



Marcel Broodthaers (Brussels 1924 - Cologne 1976)

Charles Baudelaire. Pauvre Belgique, 1974

Offset.

325 x 250 mm.

152 pp., wrappers, dust jacket of tracing paper with, on front and back-cover printed 'ABC ABC ABC ABC A' masking the title 'Pauvre Belgique'.

This is number 18 in an edition of:

- 4 copies (A-D).
- 40 copies (1-40).

Numbered, dated and signed M.B.

The information on the covers stating Paris and New York as places of publication is contradicted by the colophon stating that the book has been printed at the expense of Daled, Gevaert and Lebeer, all three residing in Brussels at the time.

Literature:

Jan Ceuleers, *Marcel Broodthaers - The Complete Prints and Books*, Galerie Ronny Van de Velde, Antwerp, 2012, p. 58-59, no. 43

Artist description:

Marcel Broodthaers began his career as a poet, making his first work of art—a sculpture consisting of his unsold books of poetry—at the age of 40. Broodthaers's work shows varied compositions between sculpting/constructions and poetry. His deep concern with language and linguistic conventions made him play with ideas and double meanings of words. He played with the authorship and uniqueness of the words which revealed the cultural stereotypes and symbols of national identity embedded in everyday forms of communication. He introduced language in his art and used some raw materials like the shells of eggs or mussels, but also furniture, clothing, garden tools, household gadgets and reproductions of artworks. Marcel Broodthaers stands out among the 'conceptual' artists who often employ philosophical language, but seldom with mastery. While most of his colleagues work away unhindered by this lack of knowledge, Broodthaers always knows more than he states. From beginning to end, he keeps mixing high and low culture in a way at once subtle and disruptive.