In 1973 Alighiero Boetti changed his name to Alighiero e Boetti. The addition of an ‘e’ (‘and’ in Italian) has the simple effect of division. What was one becomes two. The integrity of the self (the purported referent of the name) is split into two halves. He could, however, have split the self otherwise with different effects and consequences. He could have adopted the moniker, Alighiero e Boetti. The conjunction ‘and’ is worlds apart from ‘or’. With ‘and’ what is divided is included, whereas with ‘or’ what is divided is excluded. The formula Alighiero e Boetti is an inclusive disjunction.

The retrospective of Boetti’s work, *Game Plan*, currently on view at MOMA places this logic into the foreground. The entrance to the exhibition has a blown up version of the postcard *Twins* (1968) a work that clearly foreshadows the linguistic intervention into his artistic signature. The image on the postcard is a photomontage depicting two figures holding hands that look nearly identical (both are Boetti). In addition to this crass repurposing of the postcard as a billboard style advertisement is the early work *Ping Pong* (1966), consisting of two light boxes that flank each side of the entryway, flashing intermittently when a right handed person draws with their left hand: a strategy that Boetti often used. The logic is clear; for Boetti, art is a game of division played with oneself in which each work becomes a new opportunity to multiply the self.

The exhibition plays this logic out across Boetti’s divergent output often obscured by his tendency toward overproduction (producing, for example, more or less 150 embroidered maps). The exhibition focuses the work around its essential lines of thought, excising the sense of repetition that threatens to overwhelm the subtle shifts that orient Boetti’s exploration of singularity and multiplicity. There is perhaps only one conspicuously absent series of work, the airplane series. From this work of editorial condensation a dominant idea emerges, despite the stress, for example, that the exhibition places on his attempt to distance himself from his early Arte Povera concerns. For Boetti, the greatness of art does not lie in resolving contradictions, but in allowing them to subsist. His work is constantly playing with the tensions between opposites: space and time, singularity and multiplicity, identity and difference, order and chaos, presence and absence. By allowing contradictions to subsist, the artwork occasions an act of division in the self that complicates what is dominant and what is subaltern, what is known and unknown, expected and unexpected, the familiar and the strange, the personal and the impersonal, as and that tourism depends on narcissism and the human’s indefatigable ability to map its expectations onto the foreign? He certainly plays with this belief, with these expectations. And if one knows? Then what? Should one not travel? In the end, the works continued interest lies in its uncertainty and unease. Boetti’s willingness to indulge, overindulge, and then nonetheless distantly, mock; his awareness that art is not merely a game to be played, but a trap. I choose then to read the clasp in the postcard *Twins* not as an expression of solidarity with his self (with his double), but as sinister pact. One never knows whether one’s double is a friend or an enemy. Consistent with the logic of inclusive disjunction, Boetti refuses the forced choice of the ‘or’; his self is both friend and enemy.

- Alexi Kukuljevic