

MRZB, John Roebas and Massimo Vaschetto

Subtle Fixations

28.01.2023 - 18.03.2023

MRZB is an artistic collective based between Turin and Amsterdam that includes Andrea Parenti, Désirée Nakouzi De Monte, Filippo Tocchi and Pietro Cortona. Its nomadic and collaborative practice questions the process of creation as an agglomeration of tensions and forces. MRZB relates to the marginal, the domestic, the discarded and the suburban — as psychedelic, removed and hallucinatory universes — to go through the spectres and residues of a massified and centripetal reality. In recent years, the collective has articulated its practice into a series of *mise-en-scènes*.

Appropriating the formats of the spectacle and taking them adrift, MRZB has produced polyphonic assemblages, pathetic and exaggerated microcosms that incorporate and re-signify the detrita of contemporary culture.

For *Subtle Fixations*, MRZB is showing two collages and the sculptures *Rusty S.* and *Pitti Blue* — the Sisters — puppets and *dei ex machina* from the third fragment of *Stili Drama*, a para-film, installation, sound and sculptural project, which mirrors the collective's research, the narrative and formal expedient employed in MRZB's practice.

John Roebas (*1985, Honduras) lives and works in New York City. His practice involves photography, painting and sculpture in a process-intensive approach that is not limited to one medium, but explores and experiments with exposure and reflection, with both subject and surface.

For this show, Roebas presents a selection from his photographic series of *Decoys*. Used to trick and lure someone close to a situation, decoys are commonly employed in hunting and warfare. They are forms of deceit and mystification of reality. The photos selected focus on the muppet Elmo, a well-known fictional television character. They were taken in Times Square, where people disguised as famous personalities are not rare, as tourists tip them to be photographed with them. In part voyeuristic, in part intimate, yet dystopic and distant, these photos highlight this cultural trend and let us think about what's the fascination with disguising oneself as someone else and for what gains when we participate?

Massimo Vaschetto (*1980) lives and works in Milan. Themes such as pain and pleasure, and the way they intertwine within the idea of exposed intimacy, are central in Vaschetto's practice. His interest has increasingly focused on the liminal space between social behaviour and individual intimacy. On one side, there is the social persona, which is influenced by the collective behaviour, on the other side, there is the private identity that exclusively expresses itself in its intimate surroundings. Vaschetto's interest lies in the threshold of the encounter between these two spheres — the public and the private — and how they interact, overlap, and take distance from each other.

The exhibition displays a selection of recent works that pictorially re-elaborate images publicly disseminated through mass-media. In these paintings, Vaschetto confronts a certain mass-media and chronicled fetishism of the intimate to let the subject reconnecting to its private dimension.

Baleno International

Via Montecuccoli 11G, Rome, Italy address

baleno.international website

info@baleno.international e-mail