



Andréhn-Schiptjenko

STOCKHOLM PARIS

Tony Matelli

Born 1971 in Chicago, USA

Lives and works in New York, USA

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Tony Matelli works in a variety of sculptural techniques and materials, his œuvre displaying an uncanny fusion of conceptual clarity and technical breadth. Many issues of his generation – alienation, ambivalence, and decadence – manifest themselves directly in his work. His sculptures possess a concision and frankness that can seem both crass and profound. There is an element of provocation in Matelli's work; a protest against playing by the universally accepted rules or conventions that exist as an inseparable part of the world that surrounds us. His sculptures can best be described as anti-monuments, re-interpreting the tradition of hyperrealism in American sculpture.

Tony Matelli born 1971 in Chicago, lives and works in New York City. Recent institutional solo exhibitions include *I Hope All Is Well...* at 500 Capp Street, San Francisco, USA (2018), *Hera* at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, USA (2017) *New Gravity*, The Davis Museum, Wellesley College, Massachusetts (2014) *A Human Echo*, ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark and Bergen Kunstmuseum, Bergen, Norway (2012-2013).

Recent Solo Exhibitions (selected)

- 2023** *Displacement Map* Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris, France.
Timelines, Maruani Mercier Gallery, Brussels, Belgium.
- 2022** *Arrangements*, Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, USA.
- 2020** *Abandon*, Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris, France.
Tony Matelli, Alone Gallery, East Hampton, USA.

Recent Group Exhibitions (selected)

- 2023** *L'autre musée. Les trésors d'une grande collection d'art contemporain*, Frac Bretagne, Rennes, France.
Reshaped Reality: 50 Years of Hyperrealistic Sculpture, Palazzo Bonaparte, Rome, Italy.
Hyper Sensible, Musée d'Arts de Nantes, Nantes, France.
- 2022** *Hyperréalisme. Ceci n'est pas un corps*, Musée de Maillol, Paris, France.
Among Friends: Three Views of a Collection, Flag Art Foundation, New York, USA.
Janus, Morgan Presents, New York, USA.
Taxonomies of Imagination, Make Room, Los Angeles, USA.

Public Collections (selected)

- ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark.
Uppsala Art Museum, Uppsala, Sweden.
FLAG Art Foundation, New York, USA.
FRAC Nouvelle-Aquitaine, Bordeaux, France.
MUDAM Luxembourg, Luxembourg.



Tony Matelli

Installation view, *Displacement Map*,
Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris, France, 2023



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Installation view, *Displacement Map*,
Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris, France, 2023



Tony Matelli

Installation view, *Lion (Bananas)*,
Jardin des Tuileries,
Paris, France, 2023





Tony Matelli
Installation
view, *Hyper*
Sensible, Musée
d'Arts de Nantes,
Nantes, France,
2023

Tony Matelli

Installation view, *Hyper
Sensible*, Musée d'Arts de Nantes,
Nantes, France, 2023





Tony Matelli

Weed 663, 2023

Painted bronze

77.5 x 50.8 x 40.6 cm

(30 1/2 x 20 x 16 in.)



Tony Matelli
Installation view, Biennale de Nice, France, 2022



Tony Matelli

Lion (Bananas), 2022

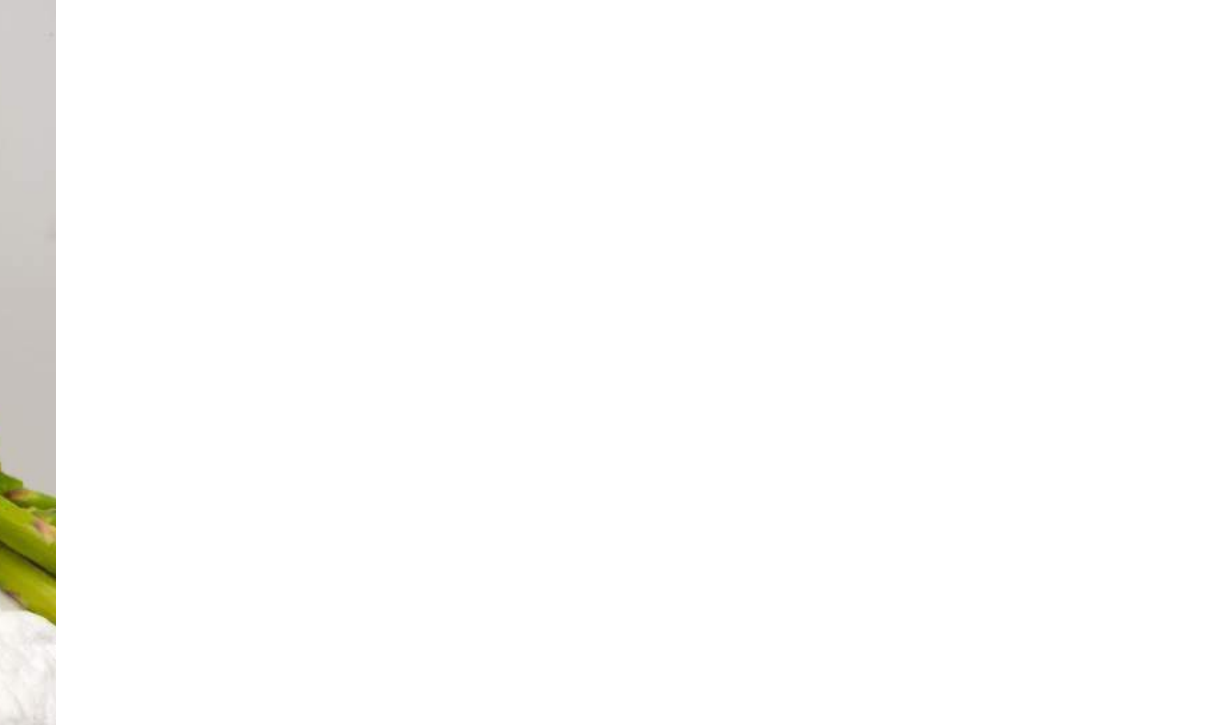
Concrete, painted bronze

91.5 x 152.5 x 46 cm

(36 x 60 x 18 in.)



Tony Matelli
Lion (Bananas), 2022
Alternate views



Tony Matelli

Head, 2022

Plaster, painted bronze

30.5 x 46 x 30.5 cm

(12 x 18 x 12 in.)





Tony Matelli
Head (Bananas), 2022
Plaster, painted bronze
35.5 x 28 x 25.5 cm
(14 x 11 x 10 in.)



Tony Matelli
Head (Mango), 2022
Plaster, painted bronze
28 x 28 x 25.5 cm
(11 x 11 x 10 in.)

Tony Matelli

Arrangement 6, 2013

Painted bronze and MDF

71 x 35.5 x 35.5 cm

(28 x 14 x 14 in.)





Tony Matelli
Weed 632, 2022
Painted bronze
33 x 40.5 x 30.5 cm
(13 x 16 x 12 in.)

Tony Matelli
Weed 625, 2022
Painted bronze
40.5 x 38 x 30.5 cm
(16 x 15 x 12 in.)





Tony Matelli
Installation view at
ARKEN Museum for Moderne
Kunst, Ishøj, Denmark,
2021



Tony Matelli
Installation view *Abandon*,
Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris, France, 2020



Tony Matelli

Weed 504, 2020

Painted bronze

45,7 x 26,7 x 29 cm

(18 x 10 1/2 x 11 1/2 in.)

Installation view at Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris,
France, 2020



Tony Matelli
Installation view at
Andréhn-Schiptjenko
Stockholm, Sweden, 2019



Tony Matelli
Installation view
at Andréhn-Schiptjenko
Stockholm, Sweden, 2019



Tony Matelli

Head, 2018

Marble, painted bronze

25.4 x 27.9 x 20.3 cm

(10 x 11 x 8 in.)

Tony Matelli
Lapse (1), 2019
Collage and paint
51 x 43.5 cm
(20 1/8 x 17 1/8 in.)





Tony Matelli
Head, 2018
Concrete, painted bronze,
painted urethane
29,2 x 22,9 x 25,4 cm
(11 1/2 x 9 x 10 in.)

Tony Matelli
Hera, 2017
Cast stone, painted bronze, steel
391 x 122 x 122 cm
(154 x 48 x 48 in.)

Installation view at
The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum
Ridgefield, USA, 2017





Tony Matelli
Installation view *New Gravity*
at The Davis Museum, Wellesley College, USA, 2014



Tony Matelli
Sleepwalker, 2014
Painted bronze
Installation view *New Gravity* at The Davis Museum,
Wellesley College, USA, 2014



Tony Matelli

Sleepwalker, 2009

Epoxy, acrylic paint, hair

162,6 x 94 x 76,2 cm

(64 x 37 x 30 in.)

Installation view *Tony Matelli - A Human Echo*
at ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark, 2012



Tony Matelli
Reverie, 2001
Fiberglass, silicone, hair, wood, oil paint
274 x 182 x 182 cm
(108 x 72 x 72 in.)

Installation view *Tony Matelli - A Human Echo* at AROS
Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Denmark, 2012



Tony Matelli

Double Veg Head, 2007

Painted bronze

(Fresh) 143 x 33 x 30 cm
(56 x 13 x 12 in.)

(Rotten) 43 x 33 x 30 cm
(56 x 13 x 12 in.)



Tony Matelli

Ancient Echo, 2002

Silicone, fiberglass, hair, t-shirt, silkscreen

90 x 85 x 80 cm

(35 x 33 x 31 in.)

Installation view

Tony Matelli - A Human Echo at ARoS Aarhus

Kunstmuseum, Denmark, 2012



Tony Matelli
Installation view at
Andréhn-Schiptjenko,
Stockholm, Sweden, 2012



Tony Matelli

Window (4), 2012

Painted bronze, stainless steel, MDF

115 x 71 x 20 cm

(45 x 27 x 7 in.)

Installation view Andréhn-Schiptjenko,
Stockholm, Sweden, 2012

Tony Matelli
Untitled, 2012
Painted bronze, MDF
108 x 46 x 46 cm
(42 x 18 x 18 in.)

Installation view,
Andréhn-Schiptjenko,
Stockholm, Sweden, 2012





Tony Matelli
Arrangement, 2012
Painted Bronze, MDF
101 x 76 x 76 cm
(40 x 30 x 30 in.)

Tony Matelli
Untitled (\$.99), 2010
Ed. of 15
Urethane, vaporized metal
22,86 x 28,89 x 28,89 cm
(9 x 11 3/8 x 11 3/8 in.)





Tony Matelli

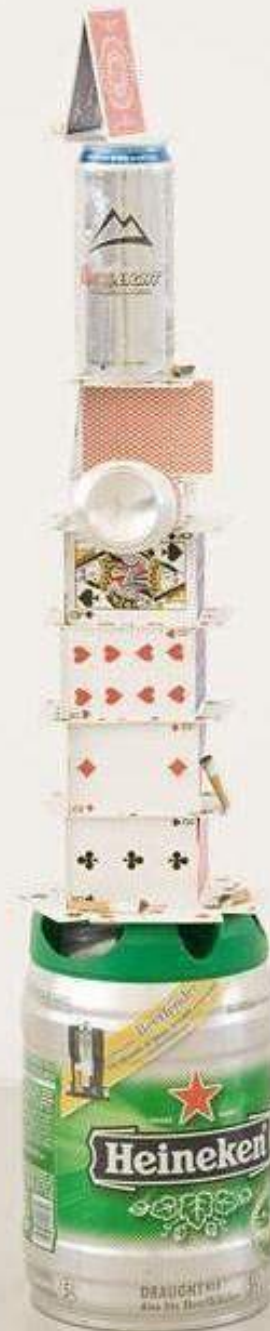
The Constant Now, 2010
Polychrome bronze, paint,
fiberglass, smoke machine,
electronic device

Ed. of 3

80 x 58 x 52 cm

(31 1/2 x 22 7/8 x 20 1/2 in.)

Tony Matelli
Yesterday, 2010
Polychrome bronze,
steel, beer cans
90 x 20 x 20 cm
(35 3/8 x 7 7/8 x 7 7/8 in.)





Tony Matelli
Fuck It, Free Yourself, 2006
Mixed media
Ed. of 6
8 x 35 x 47 cm
(3 1/8 x 13 3/4 x 18 1/2 in.)

Tony Matelli
Fucked, 2004
Silicone, fiberglass, steel,
hair, paint, weapons, implements
231 x 160 x 160 cm
(91 x 63 x 63 in.)

Installation view at Kunstraum Dornbirn,
Dornbirn, Austria, 2004





Tony Matelli
Sleepwalker, 1998
Fiberglass, steel, paint

Installation view
at Andréhn-Schiptjenko,
Stockholm, Sweden, 1999

OBSERVER

ARTS

Artist Tony Matelli on Sleepwalkers, Stray Dogs and His Latest Garden of Delights

'I think of it as a soft graffiti,' say artist Tony Matelli of his new 'Garden' sculpture installation at The Joule in Dallas.

By [Helen Holmes](#) · 04/14/19 3:42pm



Tony Matelli in 2011. Patrick McMullan

On Saturday morning in Dallas, artist Tony Matelli gave a talk at the Nasher Sculpture Center about his decades-long career, during which he and his team of assistants have created sculptural works that are mesmerizing in their realism. Some of his most effective pieces take the form of weeds, playfully sprouting up from the floor of gallery spaces.

A few years ago, one of Matelli's seminude *Sleepwalker* sculptures ignited a firestorm of controversy when it was installed on the grounds of Wellesley college. Some students started a petition to have it removed, calling the work "a source of apprehension, fear and triggering thoughts regarding sexual assault."

Matelli addressed the uproar in a conversation with Observer, and also discussed his new "Garden" sculpture series, on display this month at The Joule hotel in downtown Dallas.

Observer: What are your overall impressions of this year's Dallas Art Fair?

Matelli: I was at the fair maybe two or three years ago, and I was super impressed, which is why I was so excited to come back for this one. What I like about it is that it's so small. I have a lot of experience going to a bunch of different fairs, and unfortunately something like Miami is just so hectic and so frenetic. You end up waiting in lines at parties. There's a lot of competition for this party or that party, which dinner you're going to, who's doing this, who's doing that. It's mayhem, and I hate it. I absolutely hate it. And you never get to hang out with the people you want to hang out with. The experience of Dallas is totally the opposite—it's super manageable. Everyone goes to the same party. Everyone stays in the same hotel. You can wake up and have breakfast and run into people you would otherwise

not. And for that reason I really love it, and I actually think it's more productive for someone like me.

I thought what you said at your talk about your *Stray Dog* sculptures in Chicago was interesting.

Well, the first one was in New York through the public art fund. But they didn't have enough money for me to do three of them, which was always the original plan. So then about a year later, I was given the opportunity to do that piece again in Belgium. In that case I was able to make three of them. And it was really successful and a very cool project.

Speaking about the dog sculptures, you said you really didn't like the corporately mandated public art you'd seen. How do you feel about something like the Dallas Art Fair, which is collaborative and intimate and manageable, like you said, but also, you know, sponsored by Bank of America?

Let me be more clear about what I meant. My objection to that sort of thing is not an objection to corporations at all, although there's plenty to be said about that. It's an objection to the fact that a work of art can be co-opted as a symbol of a corporation, where it has nothing to do with the intent of the work—nothing to do with the artist at all, other than the fact that they bought it and put it out front. It becomes a kind of hood ornament for that corporate building.

You see the Robert Indiana piece outside the bank and it's *that*, you know? You see the Mark di Suvero outside a particular bank—it's almost always banks or insurance companies. It's their corporate emblem. But I wanted to make sure that no corporation in their right mind would choose to have [the dog statues] as their corporate emblem. It would be too pathetic. If they bought it and put it in their collection or in their employee park or something like that, I'd have no problem with that. I just didn't want it to be debased to the level of it being a symbol for the institution.



Stray Dog by Tony Matelli, taken on the opening day of the 2012 Armory Show. TIMOTHY A. CLARY/AFP/Getty Images

I like what you said about wanting to create sculptures that evoke empathy. A lot of people at Wellesley College had a negative reaction to your *Sleepwalker* statue, while people actually pet your dog sculptures. How do you feel about your dog sculptures evoking more empathy than your sculptures of humans?

Well, I think humans are funny that way. I think in general humans have more empathy for dogs than they do for people. I see it almost every day in New York in the way people behave with other people versus the way they behave with dogs. Dogs are literal empathy magnets. That's essentially the reason they exist, so they're uniquely suited for that. Because they don't have anything to get in the way of empathy—they don't have egos in the way that we understand them. That's why dogs are so successful in receiving our affection.

Someone tried to steal the dog statue, but no one tried to steal the *Sleepwalkers*.

They tried to destroy the *Sleepwalkers*, actually.



A woman takes a picture of Matelli's *Sleepwalker* on the Wellesley College campus in 2014. Darren McColister/Getty Images

What were you thinking when you decided to install *Sleepwalker* at Wellesley?

I have to say that we didn't think much about the context. I know it was a women's college, but I never once thought about that, honestly. I actually made a female *Sleepwalker*—it just wasn't the one we put there. I never once said to myself, *Oh, this is going to be triggering because of some kind of domestic breakdown in a particular family of one of these women here.* Never once did that cross my mind. And I think one of the good things to come out of this is that now maybe it'll cross my mind. But still, I think it's kind of infantilizing to then say that this campus cannot handle a sculpture like this. That's just insane.

Why did you choose to work with your sculptures that are currently on display at The Joule?

For me, it's really arbitrary, almost just by chance. When we find a cool statue, we'll make a piece with it. If we don't find a cool statue I'll sculpt one and we'll make it that way, and then we adorn it with whatever kind of perishable items we think look good. But I'm never like, "This piece from art history, let's violate that moment. Let's play off that somehow."



A work from Matelli's 'Garden' series on display at The Joule. Helen Holmes

I don't necessarily see the fruit on those statues as a violation.

I kind of do. I think of it as a soft graffiti. Like a pie-in-the-face kind of vibe. In fact, the origin of this body of work came from everyday items. I thought a broken-down, rusted washing machine with a fresh strawberry on it would be a very compelling image. And so I was pursuing this body of work in that way, and I wanted people to feel it more with their bodies and have more of a connection to themselves. So to me, the broken-down object doesn't matter. I almost don't even think about it.

Whether it's a sculpture or a washing machine, you mean?

Yeah. I think maybe next year it *will* be a washing machine. I think we'll eventually do a broken-down car door. It's a thing that worked, and now it doesn't. Or a thing that had value and now doesn't.

How much do you think about value in terms of your own stuff? Do you value value at all?

You mean the price? Yeah, of course. In terms of commercial value, the more money I make, the more attention the work gets and the more ability I have to make better, bigger work. So that's super clear. I mean, that's kind of a Jeff Koonsian rationale of high prices, and I think he's right, actually. I believe in that. I think artists should be making lots of money, because these things should be treated as valuable objects. And if we want to care for them and treat them as valuable objects, they need to actually have value. So yeah, I want those prices to be as high as the market can sustain them.

Are you making anything new?

We're making a sculpture for Frieze Art Fair that is of a lion—a broken-down lion. I think it's an old Assyrian lion that I found at the Met. I doubled it in size and added some other details to it, just to make it a little more interesting. And so we're casting that in a new cast stone material that we've never worked with before. We're always looking for better and new material to work with, something that emulates what we want the end result to look like.

What do you want the end result to look like for that one?

We want it to look like a kind of limestone, so we're actually using limestone powders and concrete, and we're trying to keep as close to the desired materials as possible. I think it's going to be sick.

This interview has been condensed and edited for clarity.

Filed Under: Arts, Visual Art, Nasher Sculpture Center, Wellesley College, Tony Matelli, Robert Indiana, Empathy, Mark Di Suvero, Dallas Art Fair, Sculpture



VALÉRIE DUPONCHELLE @VDuponchelle
ENVOYÉE SPÉCIALE À NANTES (LOIRE-ATLANTIQUE)

Et soudain, l'hyper-réalisme est partout. En septembre dernier, le Musée Maillol a ouvert le feu à Paris avec « Hyper-réalisme. Ceci n'est pas un corps », sorte de train fantôme en quarantaine d'œuvres spectaculaires, de John DeAndrea à Erwin Wurm, de Maurizio Cattelan à Fabien Mérelle, plongées comme des monstres dans la pénombre du mystère. Toutes ces sculptures scrutaient le corps au plus près. Elles étaient souvent crues comme le sexe, la vanité, la vieillesse et la mort. La prestigieuse Fondation Beyeler de Bâle a renchéri en octobre en célébrant ses 25 ans, ses 100 expositions et ses 1000 événements culturels, de manière tout à fait iconoclaste. Elle a placé avec humour treize sculptures hyper-réalistes de l'artiste américain Duane Hanson (1925-1996) face à une centaine de ses chefs-d'œuvre. Un laveur de vitres, un jardinier sur son tracteur de jardin, une mère dépassée avec bébé et poussette, les enfants de l'artiste, très années 1970, face à Kandinsky, Monet, Giacometti, Max Ernst et le Douanier Rousseau ? Une métaphore directe du public et une mise en abyme très réussie de son jeune conservateur, Raphaël Bouvier. L'anniversaire fut joyeux.

Ce printemps, le Musée d'arts de Nantes propose « Hyper sensible », un autre regard sur ces sujets plus complexes et plus métaphysiques qu'on ne le croit. Un renversement des valeurs qui s'exprime par une analyse ouvertement intellectuelle, une certaine délicatesse, une approche pour ainsi dire pudique de sujets souvent dénués et un parcours tout en nuances dans son patio blanc. Là où l'hyper-réalisme faisait frémir d'horreur les adeptes du minimalisme, voici 30 œuvres de 11 artistes internationaux qui veulent vous faire réfléchir. « De la réalité, elles empruntent tout, sans apparente sélection : la couleur, la matière, les attributs, l'échelle. Cette description n'explique en rien, pourtant, le trouble dans lequel l'exposition nous plonge. Celui-ci semble provenir de la combinaison de deux mouvements contradictoires : la présence par l'illusionnisme parfait et l'antropomorphisme des sculptures et l'absence, par le caractère évidemment inerte, mort, des figures », souligne Sophie Lévy, directrice du Musée d'arts de Nantes et commissaire générale de l'exposition.

Nantes a été le premier musée français à acheter l'œuvre de Duane Hanson (1925-1996), le pionnier américain de l'hyper-réalisme dont les personnages portent sur leurs épaules la critique politique et sociale induite du « rêve américain ». Sa *Flea Market Lady* date de 1990 mais elle surprend toujours aujourd'hui par son acuité sociologique et son humanité. Le fait que ce soit le seul Duane Hanson des collections publiques françaises témoigne de la piétine considération dans laquelle on tenait alors ce courant trop humain pour être noble, trop figuratif à l'heure du règne minimaliste ou conceptuel. À Nantes, c'est grâce à



HYPERRÉALISME QUAND L'IMMOBILITÉ DE LA SCULPTURE SE TRANSFORME EN ART VIVANT

CETTE DISCIPLINE
ULTRAFIGURATIVE, LONGTEMPS
JUGÉE TROP FIDÈLE AU RÉEL
POUR ÊTRE NOBLE ET MUSÉALE,
CONNAÎT UN REGAIN D'AMOUR.
APRÈS LE MUSÉE MAILLOL
ET LA FONDATION BEYELER,
LE MUSÉE D'ARTS DE NANTES
PROPOSE DE NOUS FAIRE
RÉFLÉCHIR, AVEC « HYPER
SENSIBLE », EN METTANT
EN SCÈNE LE CORPS.

Pissenlits et Autres Herbes folles, de Tony Matelli (en haut à gauche), *Amber Reclining*, de John DeAndrea face au Josh, de Tony Matelli (au centre), une silhouette de Daniel Firman (en haut à droite) : le Musée d'arts de Nantes présente 30 œuvres de 11 artistes internationaux.
MUSÉE D'ARTS DE NANTES, PHOTO, C. CLOS, COURTESY CEYSSON & BÉNÉTIÈRE ET DANIEL FIRMAN, PHOTO AURELIEN MOLE/ADAGP, PARIS, 2023.

l'Estade Duane Hanson et la puissante galerie Gagosian que sont exposés sa *Cheerleader*, pom-pom girl adolescente et trop maquillée de 1988, et *Children Playing Game*, ses enfants jouant pour toujours sur un tapis sans grâce.

Puissance narrative

Révolution ? Sophie Lévy a choisi de citer le philosophe berlinois Walter Benjamin en prologue : « Sentir l'aura d'une chose, c'est lui conférer le pouvoir de lever les yeux » (Sur quelques thèmes baudelairiens, 1982). De fait, c'est avec tact et circonspection qu'« Hyper sensible » met en scène ce « langage non verbal » qu'est le corps. Les pissenlits et autres Herbes folles de l'artiste américain Tony Matelli, trompe-l'œil si chers aux collectionneurs, parsèment le chemin comme pour rappeler que « le vrai vient du faux », comme en poésie. C'est donc avec un certain recul et souvent en silence que le public découvre les silhouettes en mouvement stoppé net de l'artiste lyonnais Daniel Firman, les pèlerins cachés sous des couvertures de la Flamande Berlinde De Bruyckere, les êtres nus, comme Adam et Eve chassés du paradis, de John DeAndrea (né en 1941 à Denver), les angoissants *Bébés* de silicone de l'Autralien Sam Jinks ou la femme à genoux du Serbe Marc Sijan, sorte de déesse égyptienne contemporaine.

On avait pressenti ce nouveau regard sur l'hyper-réalisme à la dernière Biennale de Lyon, qui a consacré un espace immense aux installations figées dans le

gris de la pierre par l'artiste belge Hans Op de Beeck, rêveur né à Turnhout en 1969. Caravanes, fleurs, jouets, lac, poussette, vélos, lampions... Tous ces artefacts copiés sur le réel campaient un décor de film mélancolique et introspectif qui a saisi les festivaliers par sa puissance narrative. Avec « Silence & Résistance », le Musée de Flandre propose jusqu'au 3 septembre, à Cassel, dans le Nord, « Quand l'art de Hans Op de Beeck rencontre les maîtres flamands », soit une vingtaine de ses œuvres hyper-réalistes et contemporaines, figées dans l'instant et le gris, confrontées à la palette colorée des maîtres flamands des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles. Sa danseuse de music-hall debassée et au repos, son étrange cavalier, torse nu, avec singe à l'épaule, sa vanité reconstituée en 3D avec le crâne, le verre, le citron, la grappe de raisin et le papillon, tout cela « questionne sur la finitude des choses et de l'existence », comme la peinture vénérée du Siècle d'or hollandais.

« L'idée d'épuisement »

Il faut pour ce faire changer d'optique. Commissaire indépendante et esprit original, Caroline Smulders avait fort à faire, à Drawing Now, en mars, au Carreau du Temple, pour convaincre les amateurs de belles feuilles des bonnes intentions de l'artiste du pop californien Mel Ramos (1935-2018). Insistant sur le fait que sa femme fut son modèle privilégié, cette passionnée entendait faire valoir « le regard féministe sous-entendu » de ses pin-ups explicites surgissant d'une



banane épluchée, jusque-là regardées plutôt comme des gadgets sexy, adorés du marché américain et allemand (*Le Peintre et son modèle*, le plus cher de ses dessins, était à 70 000 euros, chez Patrice Trigano). En 2016, le MacLyon avait exposé « Mel Ramos : beautés familiales », suite à une donation d'Ernst Hilger, ami et collectionneur de l'artiste. Alors directeur du MacLyon, Thierry Raspail soulignait déjà « l'idée première d'épuisement d'un sujet, ici la pin-up, présente dans toutes les peintures de Mel Ramos, qui évoque cette époque où la publicité s'invite dans notre quotidien. Cette idée d'épuisement rappelle de toute évidence les portraits sérigraphiés d'Andy Warhol, artiste phare du pop art américain dont le travail réside dans la répétition d'un même sujet représenté ».

Il reste une frontière délicate entre sculpture et hyper-réalisme, genre qui garde une certaine décote d'un art mineur. Beaucoup des puristes, dont son galeriste Daniel Templon, s'étaient offusqués que le sculpteur américain George Segal (1924-2000), érudit proche d'Allan Kaprow, qui inventa des personnages mélancoliques plongés dans le plâtre et l'anonymat du monochrome, soit classé par les hyper-réalistes au Musée Maillol. De la même façon, le sculpteur australien Ron Mueck, né en 1950 à Melbourne, connu pour ses œuvres à l'échelle XXL, avait pris le contrôle de ses habitudes et de ses confrères en proposant une toute petite sculpture : *Untitled (Man in a Sheet)*, 1997, figurant un homme sans corps rempli dans un drap, bizarrerie sortie de la collection Olbricht, en Allemagne. Sollicite pour participer à « Hyper sensible », cet artiste réputé taciturne a décliné l'invitation. Il était pourtant en clôture de l'exposition magistrale de Laurence Bertrand Dorléac sur la nature morte, « Les Choses », au Musée du Louvre jusqu'au 23 janvier dernier, avec son énorme poulet à cuire suspendu par les pieds. Il reviendra, seul et en gloire, à la Fondation Cartier, à Paris, du 8 juin au 5 novembre.

« Pourquoi le regard, au-delà de l'intérêt pour la prouesse technique de la réalisation, est-il aussi fortement trouble ? Où se situe véritablement l'œuvre d'art ? Si ce n'est par son absolue immobilité, ne se refuse-t-elle pas ici une forme d'art vivant, à l'instar du théâtre qui, nous plaçant à distance de nous-mêmes, permet de nous regarder autrement ? », s'interroge Katell Jaffres, commissaire scientifique de l'exposition nantaise. Maître de l'étrange, Tony Matelli fait planer les corps en lévitation, voire tête en bas. En 2014, son *Sleepwalker* quasi nu, trivial et trop réaliste, avait semé la terreur sur le campus du Wellesley College, l'un des plus chics des États-Unis, réservé à son élite féminine en puissance. Avec une pédagogie exemplaire, le Musée d'arts de Nantes laisse sur les cimaises les cours d'histoire de l'art, ses courants, ses acteurs, et la leçon de choses sur les techniques. Reste au visiteur la rencontre directe avec les œuvres. ■

« Hyper sensible. Un regard sur la sculpture hyper-réaliste », au Musée d'arts de Nantes (44), jusqu'au 3 septembre, Catalogue Silvana Editoriale/Nantes Métropole, 28 €.

Tony Matelli

° IN CONVERSATION WITH EDITOR IN CHIEF ALICEZUCCA



Tony Matelli, Head (Female Hot Dog & Bread), 2018 Marble, painted bronze 10 x 11 x 8 in



Tony Matelli © Portrait

Tony Matelli can be considered as a member of the realist school for his hyper-realistic way of presenting what belongs to the sphere of reality, this is undoubtedly a reductive classification in my opinion, despite his works - albeit loaded with a sense of exception and unusualness compared to what reality allows us to immediately recognize - present themselves as a faithful representation of matter per se, therefore retaining (even in the apparent overturning of reality, in the decontextualization and particularity of their presentation) a high degree of perceptibility and identifiability of something that rightfully lives for us and belongs to the sphere of the possible according to what we can rationally recognize. In a context of production of reality, hyperrealism, even in a de-context like this case, always finds, from my standpoint, a logical *raison d'être*. Since, it's also true that the physical constitution of the represented subject/object must undoubtedly affect the representative activity of reality as reality is such as it is the same for all living and non-living beings - the sphere of opinion in this case would belong to the realm of dreams - for this reason the investigation on the modalities of a realistic representation of reality must strive to include the foundations on which physical reality is based. A human being is a human being, an object is an object, regardless of whether one thinks of it as such or not. We are talking about masses of interconnected matter that behave as a whole and change according to something other than someone's opinion on the matter, even in cases where somebody one day decides that the meat is composed of metal nails or that a vegetable, while maintaining its form, is composed of flesh and because of this it would begin to live - foreexample. The architecture of reality is made up of pre-constituted solids that have a volume that occupies the space and are visually recognizable as they have an identifiable form and specificity, calibrated by the biological processes that start them and by the physical laws that govern them, which go beyond what is one's ability to name them and understand the process. However, our experience of the world affects, modifies, even alters our personal perception/representation of the external world itself. The sphere of values, feelings, ideas, our habits belongs to the world of the intangible, of the formless, of the invisible and should therefore not be representable in a realistic manner. But the very act of our being in the world as "self" means that not only these entities are strictly interconnected and behave as a whole with solid matter but this is what governs our perception of reality, influencing our way to categorize ourselves realistically in the world. Matelli is a hyperrealist artist in his own right, in this sense. To the extent that he endures towards a representation of reality which presents reality for what it is but introducing a margin of "error" in the representation, he wants to provide an even more totalizing vision, putting in communication the tangible and intangible that inevitably make up reality in the totality of what would represent it in a totalizing, final, realistic way. As such for what reality is - and as such for what reality is for us. The whole. The reality in us is therefore not only in the physical elements of which it is composed, it will therefore be possible, in a totally realistic representation of reality, to take into account the various declinations that set in motion the mechanism of the production of reality itself. An idea of the experience that human beings have of the world must therefore also be included in the sphere of the representable, and Tony Matelli does just that.

Is that of Matelli perhaps the only way to arrive at an all-encompassing representation of reality, as it is known and perceived? No, but it certainly tends to shed particular light on some important ways of representation and perception. Our brain is a sort of balancing mechanism with respect to variations in external reality. But to what extent does the stability of the real world depend on the variations of our perceptual apparatuses? What role do our brains and minds play in all of this? Where are things: in the world, or in the sensory organs, therefore in the mind of those who perceive them? Outside of matter, in their function, are things perhaps there unchanged or do we make them what they are? The difference, of course, is between a simply perceived world and a constructed world, where by construction we mean the activity carried out by our brain on the indications provided by the perceptive operations, of our senses and our ability to "Feel". Tony Matelli works on the thread that binds perception and representation and follows it through our daily relationship with the world (the perception and representation of the ordinary taking into account of what the object/subject is in itself and the pedagogical, functional and emotional value with which it is overloaded) serving it through the perception of the artistic artifact.

Now, the problem, in a context of production of reality is precisely that reality, yes, exists as such and independently of the various range of variables that would make it interpretable; but there are also variables that allow us to experience reality. For this reason, it's possible to pose this question in the context of a "realistic representation" of reality. If it is certain that the architecture of the real is undoubtedly composed of matter and pre-established solids, it is also true that reality exists in the "self" regulated by the amount of information that the "self" possesses to define it as such and to arrive to a totalizing knowledge of the real this must be taken into account, it is a distinction/cohesion that refers to an important ontological problem. In the end, in essence, it is never just the thing seen, it is never just the thing perceived, it is never just our idea, it is never just the matter per se. What we figure always depends on many factors that are true in us and true for the actual reality of the physical and biological laws that govern the universe but interconnected with the most varied range of conceptual and sensorial factors (we speak of senses, and of sight as the sense responsible for the perception of visual stimuli) there will therefore also be factors such as the distance between the subject and what is seen, lighting, movement and so on.

We cannot ignore all this in an attempt to imagine reality. For example, suppose we are looking at the moon. The moon is so loaded with meaning, it's so easy to get confused. In Oscar Wilde's Salomé, Herod reflects on the "strange aspect" of the moon, comparing it to a madwoman looking for lovers. Herodias replies that "the moon is just like the moon, that's all". And it is true, the moon is just the moon, but it is also true that they have indeed turned their attention to the moon... but they still have in mind the princess Salomé. The moon became a princess like Salomé and Salomé became the moon herself.

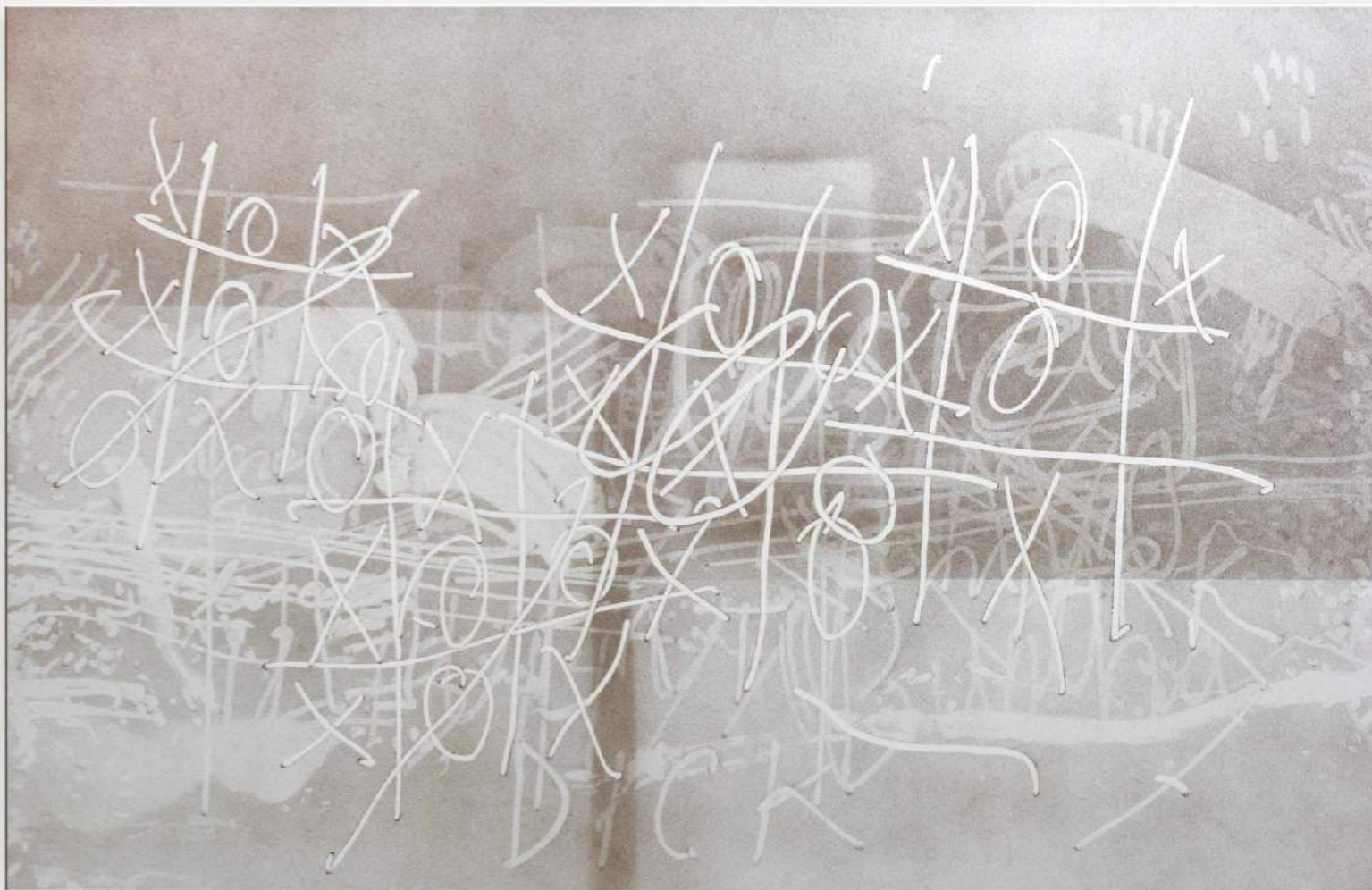
But then, which Moon are we talking about when we talk about the Moon? And how much, even if we could see the Moon from the Earth - without conceptual/sentimental implications - what we will see will realistically be the visible moon or something resembling the Moon for what the moon actually would be if viewed closely? And, if we got closer to the Moon, the moon would still remain the moon and that would be it, but the "moon as seen" would change again. And so, finally on the moon, we will probably see something completely different again.

The figuration, it goes without saying, has an even greater weight if we take into account the visible Moon and the real Moon and the ideal moon in an attempt to picture it as the Moon.

Tony Matelli, *Fucked Couple*, 2005
Silicone, steel, hair, piano, implements, clothing



Tony Matelli, *Woman in The Wind*, 2017 Marble, painted bronze 68 x 31 x 18 in



Matelli tells us about the reality in which we live in its facets taking into account the real, the feeling, the senses. He is aware that reading the perception only as a pure and simple background of the representative activity - therefore, of the subject's conceptual schemes - is not sustainable, nevertheless one would enter the realm of non-realistic figuration. Matelli's hyperrealism implements a critical operation on the real, trying not only to figure reality but the experience that the human makes of it. To understand it, therefore, we will not rely here only totally on the concepts of so much empiric philosophy that suggests that the only "thing" we know of "things" are our ideas of that perceived "thing" and therefore reality would exist in us only as an idea, but we will not rely only on a totally rational vision that wants the existing "thing" as a matter that exists in itself even if it's just for being such, regardless of the ideal relationship that one can have with that "thing" - but - we will take both into account, since understanding this is indispensable to understand the representative reversal of the "real" in Matelli's work; that yes, it "overturns", "rotates" meaning and signifier / object and subject, but does so no longer simply to show only the object / subject in its appearance as such but trying to broaden the figurative vision to the possible variables of perceived reality, which is stillreality.

◀ Tony Matelli, Tic Tac Toe, 2015
Urethane and enamel on mirror 60 x 96 in



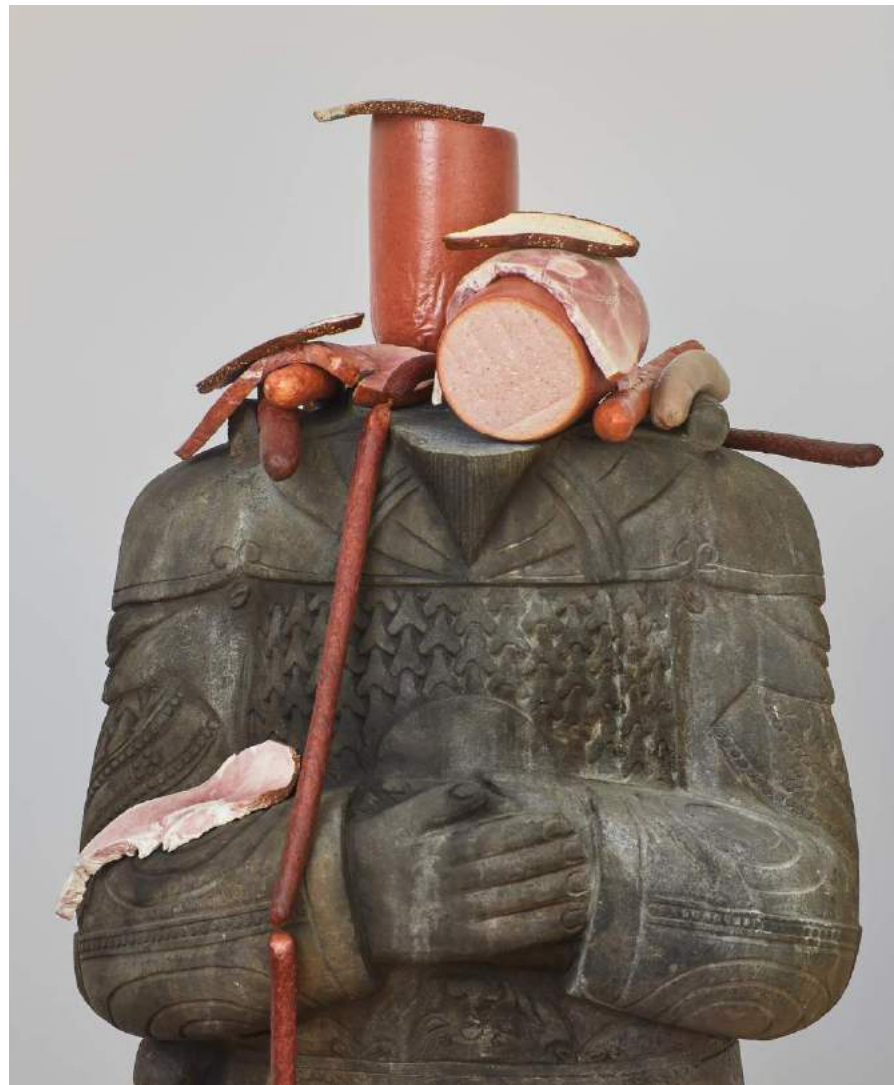
◀ Tony Matelli, Figure 1, 2015
Silicone steel, urethane, hair
ed. 2/2 67 x 18 x 8 in

Tony Matelli è dato appartenere a quella scuola realista per il suo iperrealistico modo di presentare quanto alla sfera del reale appartiene, questo è in me fuor di dubbio un incasellamento riduttivo, nonostante i suoi lavori - seppur caricati di un senso di eccezione ed inusualità rispetto a quello che la realtà ci consente di riconoscere immediatamente come tale - si presentano quali fedele rappresentazione della materia di per sé, mantenendo dunque (pur nell'apparente capovolgimento del reale, nella decontestualizzazione e particolarità della loro presentazione) un alto grado di percepibilità ed identificabilità di un qualcosa che a buon diritto per noi abita ed appartiene alla sfera del possibile secondo quanto a noi è dato riconoscere razionalmente.

In un contesto di produzione della realtà, l'iperrealismo, anche in decontestazione come in questo caso, trova sempre, in me, una logica ragion d'essere. Poiché, sarà pur vero che sull'attività rappresentativa del reale debba incidere senza dubbio la costituzione fisica del soggetto/oggetto rappresentato in quanto la realtà è tale poiché uguale per tutti gli esseri viventi e non - la sfera dell'opinione in questo caso apparterebbe al sogno - per questo l'indagine sulle modalità di una realistica rappresentazione del reale deve sforzarsi di comprendere quali siano i fondamenti su cui poggia la realtà fisica.

Un essere umano è un essere umano, un oggetto è un oggetto, indipendentemente che io lo pensi come tale o non. Si tratta di masse di materia interconnessa che si comportano come un tutto e mutano in base ad altro che la mia opinione in merito, anche nei casi in cui io un giorno decida che la carne si compone di chiodi o un vegetale, pur mantenendo la sua forma, si componga di carne e per questo inizi a vivere - per esempio. L'architettura del reale si compone di solidi precostituiti che hanno un volume che occupa lo spazio e sono riconoscibili visivamente in quanto hanno una forma ed una specificità identificabile, calibrata dai processi biologici che li principiano e dalle leggi fisiche che li governano, che esulano da quella che sia la mia capacità di dargli un nome e di comprenderne il processo. La nostra esperienza del mondo tuttavia, incide, modifica, addirittura altera la nostra personale percezione/rappresentazione del mondo esterno. La sfera dei valori, dei sentimenti delle idee, le nostre abitudini appartiene al mondo dell'intangibile, dell'informe, del non visibile e dovrebbe quindi non essere rappresentabile realisticamente.

Ma l'atto stesso del nostro essere al mondo in quanto "io" fa sì che non solo questi siano strettamente interconnessi e si comportino come un tutto con la materia solida ma si tratta di quanto governa la nostra percezione del reale, influenzando il nostro modo di incasellare noi stessi realisticamente nel mondo. Tony Matelli, è un artista iperrealista a buon diritto, in questo senso. Nella misura in cui attenda ovvero ad una rappresentazione del reale, che presenti la realtà per ciò che la realtà è ma introducendo un margine di "errore" nella rappresentazione, vuole fornire una visione della stessa ancor più totalizzante, mettendo in comunicazione tangibile ed intangibile che imprescindibilmente compongono la realtà nella totalità di ciò che in maniera totalizzante la rappresenterebbe, finalmente, realisticamente. In quanto tale per quel che la realtà è - ed in quanto tale per quel che la realtà è per noi. Il tutto. La realtà in noi è dunque non solo negli elementi fisici di cui è composta, si potrà dunque, in una rappresentazione totalmente realistica del reale tener conto delle varie declinazioni che mettono in moto il meccanismo della produzione della realtà. Si dovrà dunque includere nella sfera del rappresentabile anche un'idea dell'esperienza che del mondo gli esseri umani fanno e Tony Matelli fa proprio questo.



Tony Matelli, Warrior, 2017
Stone, painted bronze 67 x 23 x 18 in



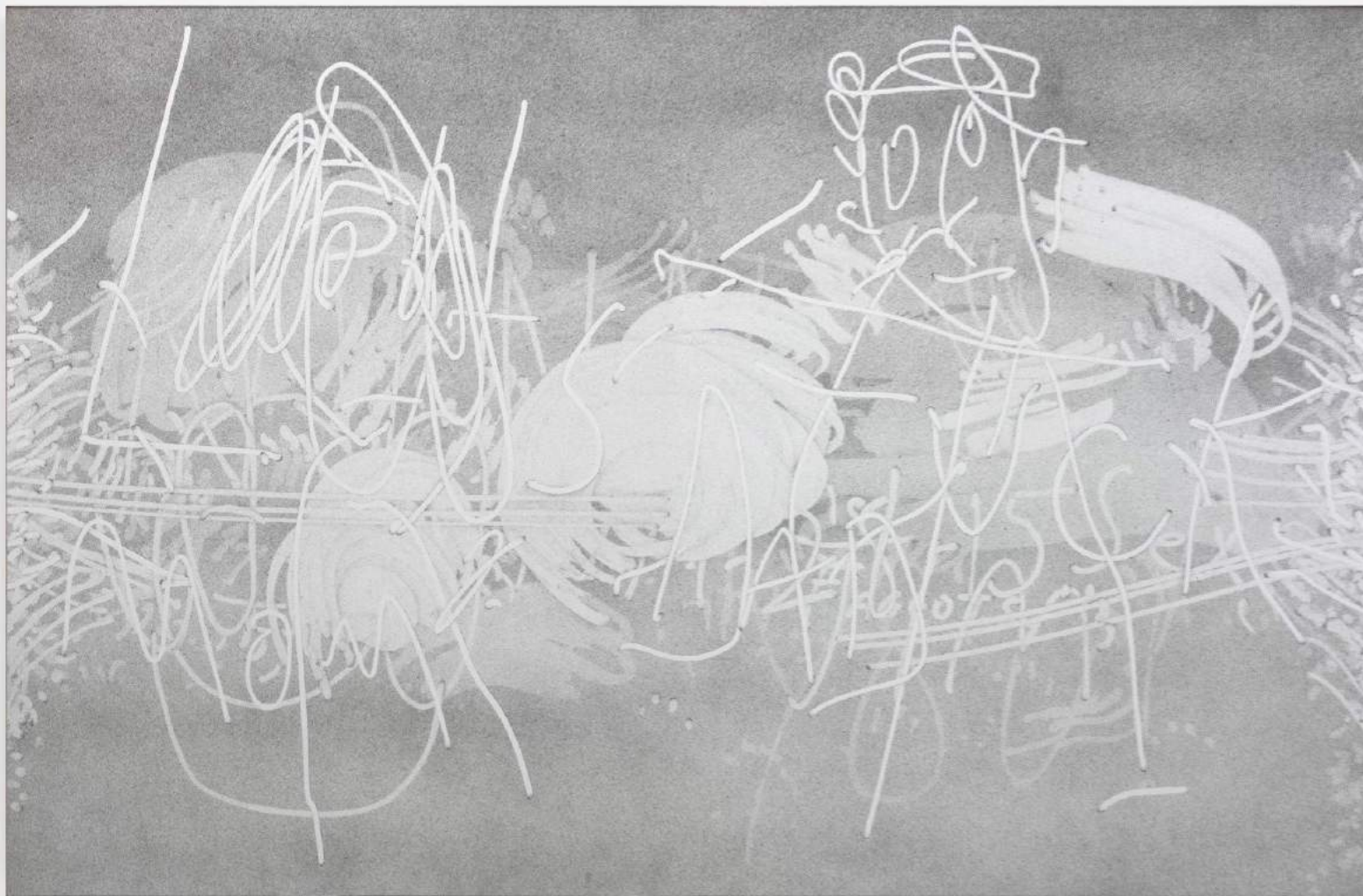
Tony Matelli, Fucked, 2004
Silicone, steel, yak hair, implements
n/a

Tony Matelli, Figure 2, 2015
Silicone steel, urethane, hair, ed. 2/2
67 x 18 x 8 in



E' quello di Matelli forse l'unico modo di addivenire ad una rappresentazione totalizzante del reale, conosciuto e percepito? No, ma di certo tende a gettare una particolare luce su alcune importanti modalità di rappresentazione e percezione. Il nostro cervello è una sorta di meccanismo di bilanciamento rispetto alle variazioni della realtà esterna. Ma in quale misura la stabilità del mondo reale dipende dalle variazioni dei nostri apparati percettivi? Che funzione hanno il nostro cervello e la nostra mente in tutto questo? Dove stanno le cose, nella mente di chi le percepisce? Fuor di materia, nella loro funzione, le cose sono forse lì invariate o siamo noi a farle diventare quel che sono? La differenza, lo si capisce, è tra un mondo semplicemente percepito e un mondo costruito, ove per costruzione si intende l'attività svolta dal nostro cervello sulle indicazioni fornite dalle operazioni percettive, dei nostri sensi e del nostro "Sentire". Tony Matelli opera sul filo che lega percezione e rappresentazione e lo segue attraverso il nostro rapporto quotidiano con il mondo (ovvero percezione e rappresentazione dell'ordinario tenendo conto di quanto l'oggetto/soggetto è di per sé e del valore pedagogico, funzionale ed emozionale del quale è sovraccaricato) servendolo attraverso la percezione dell'artefatto artistico. Ora, il problema, in un contesto di produzione della realtà è proprio quello che la realtà, sì, esiste in quanto tale ed indipendentemente dalla svariata gamma di variabili che la renderebbero interpretabile; ma pur sempre esistono anche le variabili che ci consentono di avere esperienza del reale. Ragion per cui, sarà possibile porsi questo problema nell'ambito di una "realistica rappresentazione" del reale. Se è certo che l'architettura del reale si compone fuori di dubbio di materia e solidi precostituiti, è pur vero che la realtà esiste nell' "IO" regolata dal carico di informazioni che l'io possiede per definirla come tale e per addivenire ad una conoscenza totalizzante del reale si dovrà tenerne conto, si tratta di una distinzione/coesione che rimanda a un problema ontologico importante. Alla fine, in buona sostanza, non è mai solo la cosa vista, non è mai solo la cosa percepita, mai è solo la nostra idea, mai è solo la materia di per sé. Ciò che noi figuriamo, sempre dipende da molti fattori che sono veri in noi e veri per la realtà effettiva delle leggi fisiche e biologiche che regolano l'universo ma interconnessi con la più svariata gamma di fattori concettuali e sensoriali (parliamo di sensi, e della vista quale senso preposto alla percezione degli stimoli visivi) intercorreranno dunque anche fattori quali la distanza tra me e quanto vedo, illuminazione, movimento e via omettendo. Non si potrà non tener conto di tutto questo nel tentativo di figurarsi la realtà. Supponiamo ad esempio di osservare la luna. La luna è così carica di significati, è così facile confondersi. Nella Salomé di Oscar Wilde, Erode riflette sullo "strano aspetto" della luna, paragonandola a una pazza in cerca di amanti. Erodiade risponde che "la luna è come la luna, e basta". Ed è vero, la luna è la luna e basta, ma è vero anche che loro abbiano infatti rivolto la loro attenzione alla luna... ma abbiano ancora in mente la principessa Salomé. La luna è diventata una principessa come Salomé e Salomé è diventata la luna

Ma allora di quale Luna si parla quando parliamo della Luna? E quanto, noi pur riuscissimo a vedere la luna dalla Terra - senza implicazioni concettuali/sentimentali - quello che vedremo sarà realisticamente la luna visibile o qualcosa che rassomiglia alla Luna per quel che la luna in realtà effettivamente sarebbe se vista da vicino? E, se ci avvicinissimo alla luna, la luna pur sempre resterebbe la luna e basta, ma la "luna vista" cambierebbe ancora. E così, giunti finalmente sulla luna, probabilmente vedremo nuovamente qualcosa di completamente diverso. La figurazione, va da sé, ha un peso ancora maggiore se teniamo conto della Luna visibile e la Luna reale e la luna ideale, nel tentativo di figurarci la Luna. Matelli ci parla della realtà in cui viviamo nelle sue sfaccettature tenendo conto del reale, del sentire, dei sensi. E' consapevole che leggere unicamente la percezione come unico artefatto dell'attività rappresentativa non sia possibile e non di meno si enterebbe nel regno della figurazione non realistica.



L'iperrealismo di Matelli attua un'operazione critica sul reale cercando non solo di figurare la realtà ma l'esperienza che l'uomo ne fa. Per comprenderlo dunque, non ci affideremo qui solo totalmente alle soluzioni di tanta filosofia empirista che suggerisce come l'unica "cosa" che noi conosciamo delle "cose" siano le nostre idee della "cosa" percepita e dunque la realtà esisterebbe in noi solo in quanto idea, ma non ci affideremo solo neanche ad una visione totalmente razionale che vuole la "cosa" esistente quale materia che esista di per sé anche solo per il fatto di essere tale, indipendentemente dalla relazione ideale che con la "cosa" si possa avere - ma - terremo conto di entrambe, poiché comprendere questo è indispensabile per comprendere il capovolgimento rappresentativo del "reale" in Matelli; che si, "capovolge", "ruota" significato e significante / oggetto e soggetto, ma non più semplicemente per mostrare unicamente l'oggetto/soggetto nella sua apparizione in quanto tale ma cercando di ampliare la visione figurativa alle variabili possibili del reale percepito, che sempre di realtà si tratta.

Tony Matelli, Mom & Dad, 2015
Urethane and enamel on mirror
60 x 96 in



▲ Tony Matelli, Josh, 2010 (detail)
Silicone, steel, hair and clothing
30x74x22 in

► Tony Matelli, Dick, 2011
Urethane and enamel on mirror
72 x 48 in



ALICE ZUCCA:

I would like to talk about mirrors and the sense of self and the perception of reality. This visual stratification is very interesting, how you use the dust as a filter, and how in the work, the human spectator will end up reflecting in these mirrors. It is as if in the end it was an interesting melange of experiences, words, hand strokes, fingerprints that recall the experience of an ancient human civilization that meets with the contemporary image that presents itself in front of them from time to time, defining it in detail, even in the simulated misleading lack of clarity of the surface that conveys the appearance. This is precisely what happens to us in the very act of looking at ourselves in a mirror, seeing our reflection as individuals, with a story.

Mirrors complicate the path of the image in how they give us back our reflected truth, and also overturn it, showing its visible mirrored envelope, which seems so clear, but becomes complicated when the reflection turns into the act of "reflecting". I see myself in the mirror and in the moment in which I see my image, I cannot refrain from thinking about what being myself implies; the surrounding environment, my fellow human, everything that is other than me and as such defines me as an individual.

We recognize ourselves out of habit, thanks to the mirror. But if we lived without one in our home, we would not be able to recognize ourselves: we would need others to do it for us. It would be a mutual recognition, of and by our domestic community: one would recognize the other and each one of us, consequently, would recognize himself. We would recognize our personal identity as belonging to a group. The mirror was therefore an invention of the individualistic culture, of that form of freedom that induces people to recognize themselves for themselves, in their individuality, but which is, in this case, synonymous with loneliness. We delude ourselves that what we experience looking in the mirror gives us security, increases our identity, our awareness of ourselves. In reality, we become aware of the "self" only in our relationship with the surrounding world. The mirror experience is completely useless and, to be honest, it can become misleading. Only by taking into account the fact that I am being placed in a context made of otherness "I" can exist as an individual, without this premise there is no subjectivity or pluralism, overcoming the solipsism of the self. This is what your layering of levels makes me think, they're made up of gestures, powders and words, signs of lives that are other than "me", which meet me when I reflect in your mirrors and which define my history as belonging to a group: the human race. The marks that man has left, the achievements, discoveries, experiences, whether they're social, scientific or not. We are what we are thanks to this. I talked about the act of "reflecting" before, in light of this consideration regarding the otherness and the mirror, what comes to my mind are the mirror neurons, which constitute the proof of a biological foundation of empathy. These neurons in a person's brain can reconstruct the movements that same person sees in another individual, sending signals to the sensorimotor structures so that the corresponding movements are "previewed" as in a simulation mode. There is therefore a "physical" empathy, an ability to perceive, imagine and have a direct understanding of the mental states and behaviors of others, which, based on a direct experience of our body, allows us to recognize others as similar to us and to understand their inner states. These works really involve and engage reflections on so many levels. I read somewhere that you wanted them to look like cave paintings, a primary visual tool that has largely contributed to the composition of an evolutionary history of humans and their existence in the world and in society. In the light of my considerations, I find this aim very illuminating.

Would you like to talk more about it with me?

TONY MATELLI:

You already have such a rich understanding of these works, I'm not sure what I can add. A good deal of my work is born of the friction between the self and the society. Do we see ourselves the way others do? Is it even possible to really 'see' ourselves? With the mirror paintings I wanted to frustrate the idea of a clear subjectivity—to make ones subjectivity contingent upon others.

So you see your reflection most clearly in my mirrors in the areas most touched by others. The areas that are untouched are more obscured by the collection of painted dust; rendered time. In my mirrors you experience your own image made strange and almost dreamlike by the dust accumulations and assorted finger swipes and vulgarities.

ALICE ZUCCA:

Inizieremo parlando dello specchio, della percezione del sé e della realtà. E' molto interessante questa stratificazione visiva, questo uso della polvere che fai come filtro, ed il lavoro, o l'essere umano spettatore di turno, che in questi specchi finirà per rifletterci. È come se, alla fine, poi, ci fosse un interessante melange di esperienze, parole, manate, ditate che richiamano il vissuto di un'antenate civiltà umana che si incontra con l'immagine contemporanea che si presenta di volta in volta davanti ad essi, definendola in dettaglio, pur nella simulata fuorviante non chiarezza della superficie che ne veicola l'apparizione. È proprio questo che ci succede nell'atto stesso di guardarci in uno specchio, vedendo la nostra immagine riflessa quali individui, con una storia.

Gli specchi complicano il percorso dell'immagine nella sua restituzione della nostra verità riflessa, ed anche la capovolgono mostrandone l'involucro visibile specchiato, che sembra così chiaro, ma si complica, quando il riflesso si tramuta nell'atto del "riflettere". Io vedo me stesso allo specchio e nel frangente in cui io vedo la mia immagine, io non posso esimersi dal pensare a ciò che essere me stesso implica; l'ambiente circostante, i miei simili, tutto quanto è altro da me ed in quanto tale mi definisce come individuo.

Ci riconosciamo per consuetudine, grazie allo specchio. Ma se nello spazio che abitiamo non ne possedessimo uno, noi non potremmo riconoscerci da soli: avremmo bisogno che altri lo facessero per noi. Sarebbe un riconoscimento reciproco, della e nella collettività domestica: ognuno riconoscerebbe l'altro e ognuno, di conseguenza, riconoscerebbe se stesso. Riconosceremo la nostra identità personale in quanto appartenenti a un gruppo. Lo specchio è dunque una menzogna della formazione individualistica, ed in quanto tale autorizza quel senso di libertà che induce le persone a riconoscersi da sé, nella propria individualità, ma che in verità porta ad un senso di solitudine. Non pensiamo mai a questa assurdità semplicemente perché siamo abituati a viverla sin dalla nascita. Ci illudiamo che l'esperienza dello specchio dia sicurezza, aumenti la nostra identità, la consapevolezza di noi stessi. In realtà noi acquistiamo coscienza del sé solo nel rapporto con il mondo circostante. L'esperienza dello specchio è per lo più fuorviante a conti fatti. Solo tenendo conto di essere inseriti in un contesto fatto di alterità IO posso esistere quale individuo, senza questo presupposto non si dà soggettività o pluralismo, superamento del solipsismo dell'io. E' a questo che mi fa pensare la tua stratificazione di livelli fatti di gesti, polveri e parole, segni di vite che sono altro da "me", che mi incontrano nel momento in cui io mi rifletto nei tuoi specchi e che definiscono la mia storia in quanto appartenente ad un gruppo: il genere umano. Le tracce che l'uomo ha lasciato, le conquiste, le scoperte, le esperienze, sociali, scientifiche o meno. Noi siamo, nei qui ed ora, ciò che siamo grazie a questo. Ho parlato dell'atto del "riflettere" prima, alla luce di questo discorso sull'alterità e lo specchio non possono che venirmi in mente i neuroni specchio, i quali costituirebbero la prova di un fondamento biologico dell'empatia, inclusione e consapevolezza massima di quanto è altro da me. Questi neuroni possono rappresentare nel cervello di una persona i movimenti che quella stessa persona vede in un altro individuo, e inviare segnali alle strutture sensorimotorie in modo che i movimenti corrispondenti siano "visti in anteprima" in una modalità di simulazione, oppure effettivamente eseguiti. Esiste dunque un'empatia "fisica", una capacità di percepire, immaginare e avere una comprensione diretta degli stati mentali e dei comportamenti altrui, che, sulla base di un'esperienza diretta del nostro corpo, ci permette di riconoscere gli altri come simili a noi e di comprenderne gli stati interiori. Sono davvero tanti gli spunti di riflessione che questi tuoi lavori comportano. Ho letto da qualche parte che volevi che sembrassero pitture rupestri, strumento primo a livello visivo che ha concorso largamente alla composizione di una storia evolutiva dell'uomo ed il suo stare al mondo ed in società. Alla luce di questa mia riflessione, trovo questa tua volontà molto illuminante.

Ti va di parlarne più approfonditamente con me?

TONY MATELLI:

Tu hai di già una conoscenza così profonda di questi lavori, che non sono davvero sicuro di cosa io possa aggiungere. Buona parte del mio lavoro nasce dall'attrito tra l'io e la società. Ci vediamo come vedono gli altri? Sarà mai possibile "vedere" veramente noi stessi? Con i dipinti/specchio volevo proprio smuovere l'idea di una chiara soggettività, per rendere la soggettività dipendente dagli altri. Quindi, nei miei specchi, sarà possibile vedere più chiaramente il proprio riflesso nelle aree più toccate dagli altri. Le aree che sono intatte sono più oscurate dalla raccolta di polvere dipinta. Nei miei specchi si sperimenta un riflesso del sé ora strano e quasi onirico, reso tale dagli accumuli di polvere, dai colpi delle ditate e dalle volgarità.



Tony Matelli, Installation at Künstlerhaus Bethanien



AZ:

I think you really are aware of not being alone in this world and the presence of the "other" is an important, if not fundamental, element of your research and, I also think, of your way of being. I have immersed myself in your work during these days while I have been writing about you and I happened to find your talk at WellesleyCollege in 2014, you were talking about your first "demanding" work, your self-portrait-box. Basically an empty cardboard box with your name written on it. An empty but also an open box. As if it were a still image in time, of the moment in which it is about to be filled. What's inside this box now?

TM:

The box has been collapsed for storage which I suppose is an appropriate metaphor in its own way...

I always saw this work as a kind of declaration or manifesto. As a way to live life without too much certainty or dogma. I still like the casual nature of it. That is something I have always tried to accomplish with my work. Making a work be very casual or even art-less yet somehow contain very large philosophical ideas. The Mirror Paintings are a good example of this too. This sculpture is really about the location of "self" and how hard it is to put your finger on it. The title is My Soul Searching Has Finally Paid Off... and the result is of course nothing.

AZ:

Penso che tu sia abbastanza consapevole di non essere "solo" a questo mondo e che la presenza dell' "altro" è elemento fondante della tua ricerca - e penso anche del tuo modo d'essere. Mi sono immersa nel tuo lavoro in questi giorni che sto scrivendo su di te e mi è capitato di trovare il tuo talk al WellesleyCollege del 2014, stavi parlando del tuo primo lavoro "impegnato", il tuo autoritratto-scatoletta. Niente più che una scatola di cartone, vuota, con il tuo nome scritto sopra. Una scatola vuota, ma aperta. Come se fosse un fermo immagine nel tempo, del momento in cui sta per essere riempita. Cosa c'è ora dentro questa scatola?

TM:

La scatola è stata chiusa per essere riposta e suppongo sia una metafora appropriata a modo suo ...Ho sempre visto questo lavoro come una sorta di dichiarazione o manifesto. Come un modo per vivere la vita senza troppe certezze o dogmi. Mi piace ancora la sua natura informale. Questo è qualcosa che ho sempre cercato di realizzare con il mio lavoro. Fare un lavoro sia molto casuale o addirittura privo di arte, ma in qualche modo contenente idee filosofiche molto grandi. Anche i dipinti a specchio ne sono un buon esempio. Questa scultura riguarda davvero la posizione del "sé" e quanto sia difficile metterci sopra le mani. Il titolo è "My Soul Searching Has Finally Paid Off"... e il risultato ovviamente è niente.

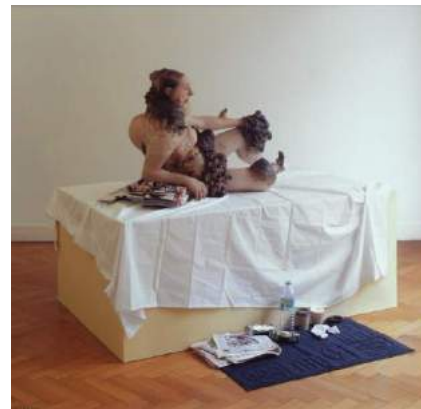


Tony Matelli, Total Torpor Mad Malaise, 2004 Silicone, steel, hair and detritus n/a

AZ:

Let's talk about Total Torpor, Mad Malaise, starting from the premise that you stated that you were interested in visualizing this sort of contrast between stoic position and physical deformation, given by the anxieties of contemporary life. It was impossible for me not fall in love with this work immediately. The first time I saw it I didn't even know it was a self portrait. It reminded me of Shakespeare's Richard III. At the beginning we have a false monologue of praise by the Duke of Gloucester, who then becomes Richard III, towards his brother, King Edward IV of England, the eldest of the sons of Richard, the Duke of York. Here this subjective passage is already revealing from the beginning Richard's envy and ambition, as his brother, Edward, reigns over the country with success. What interests us here, however, is that Richard is a hideous hunchback, symbol of a whole representation of disease that starting from his sick, deformed and monstrous body reshapes the entire stage space as a space of deformity. The stage space is the environment in which the narration develops, that is Richard's time, in the same manner our space of action will be our contemporary reality. The vision that Richard has of reality is distorted and throughout the course of the story his physical dysmorphism, in the development of the narrative, will come closer and closer in visual parallelism with what will be the deformity of his private madness caused by himself and by the events in which he is involved that he deforms himself and by which he is deformed. Riccardo is both servant and master, tormentor and victim, a mutant who takes all the weight of evil upon himself.

In 1977 an Italian actor who I love very much, Carmelo Bene decided to stage "Richard III" (supported by Gilles Deleuze - who without even seeing the show decided to write an essay about it "Un manifeste de moins"; 2002). The central idea of Bene's work was to equip Riccardo with huge prosthetic devices that exaggerated his deformity visually and in a grotesque way, gradually redefining his bodily contours. This gesture, that of making and undoing the body, is interpreted by Deleuze as a surgical gesture, which opens the bodies, dissects them, until they are shown as maimed, sick, deformed. Richard is a man of his time, ill and deformed by his time and by himself, whose purpose is no longer to reach the crown, but to dissect his own body and that of the others, embodying a majestic and funereal imagery that focuses on deformity and disease as a necessary end of every body, as the experience of a senseless "evil" that is lived or accomplished. Please, tell me more about this work.



Tony Matelli, Total Torpor Mad Malaise, 2004 Silicone, steel, hair and detritus n/a

Tony Matelli, Total Torpor Mad Malaise (Detail)



TM:

Well Richard actually was a hunchback so in that instance the metaphor kind works from what is already there in front of you. With Total Torpor... it was about making the invisible visible. I wanted to give shape to the incongruous mix of emotions I was experiencing at the time. I wanted the viewer to feel a kind of banality and weirdness at the same time. In combining the grotesquely realized body dysmorphia and the somehow comedic stoicism of the pose I wanted there to be a certain dissonance. The tension between those qualities is what the work is really about. I hoped that people would have an almost anxious identification with the subject. In general my interests lie at the intersection of internal desires and external forces—that intersection is often full of conflict. This piece was trying to touch that.

AZ:

Vorrei parlare di Total Torpor, Mad Malaise, partendo dal presupposto che eri interessato a visualizzare questa sorta di contrapposto tra posizione stoica e deformazione fisica, data dalle ansie della vita contemporanea, me ne sono subito innamorata. La prima volta che l'ho vista non sapevo neanche fosse un autoritratto. Mi ha fatto venire in mente il Riccardo III di Shakespeare. In apertura abbiamo questo falso monologo di elogio del duca di Gloucester, poi Riccardo III, nei confronti del fratello, re Edoardo IV d'Inghilterra, maggiore dei figli di Riccardo, Duca di York. Questo passaggio in soggettiva è qui fin da principio già rivelatore dell'invidia e l'ambizione di Riccardo, in quanto suo fratello, Edoardo, regna sul paese con successo. Quel che ci interessa qui però è che Riccardo è un orrendo gobbo, simbolo qui di tutto un teatro della malattia che a partire dal suo corpo malato, deforme e mostruoso arriva a ripensare l'intero spazio scenico come spazio della deformità. Lo spazio scenico sarà qui l'ambiente in cui si sviluppa la narrazione, l'epoca di Riccardo, così il nostro spazio d'azione sarà la nostra realtà contemporanea. La visione che Riccardo ha della realtà è distorta per tutto il corso della storia ed il suo dismorfismo fisico, nello sviluppo della narrazione, si avvicinerà sempre più in parallelismo visivo con quella che sarà la deformità della sua follia privata causata da se stesso e dagli eventi in cui è coinvolto che egli stesso deforma e dai quali è deformato. Riccardo è sia servo che padrone, aguzzino e vittima, un mutante che si carica su di sé tutto il peso del male. Nel 1977 un attore italiano che io amo molto, Carmelo Bene (supportato da Gilles Deleuze - che senza neanche vedere lo spettacolo decise di scriverci un saggio "Un manifesto di meno" (Deleuze 2002)) - decide di mettere in scena "Riccardo III". L'idea centrale del lavoro di Bene era quella di munire Riccardo di enormi protesi espedienti che esagerassero a livello visivo ed in maniera grottesca la sua deformità, mano a mano ridefinendone i contorni corporati. Riccardo è un uomo del suo tempo, da questo e da se stesso ammalato e deformato, il cui scopo non è più quello di raggiungere la corona, ma quello di sezionare il proprio e l'altrui corpo, in cui si incarna un immaginario maestoso e funereo che si concentra sulla deformità e malattia come deriva necessaria di ogni corpo, come esperienza di un "male" insensato che viene vissuto o compiuto.

Vorresti dirmi qualcosa di più su questo lavoro?

TM:

Richard in realtà era già un gobbo, quindi in quel caso il tipo di metafora è facilitata da ciò che ci si trova di fronte. Con Total Torpor ... si trattava di rendere visibile l'invisibile. Volevo dare forma al miscuglio incongruo di emozioni che stavo vivendo in quel momento. Volevo che lo spettatore sentisse una sorta di banalità e stranezza allo stesso tempo. Nel combinare il dismorfismo corporeo realizzato in modo grottesco e lo stoicismo in qualche modo comico della posa, volevo si avvertisse una certa dissonanza. La tensione tra queste qualità è ciò di cui tratta veramente il lavoro. Speravo che le persone avessero un'identificazione quasi ansiosa con il soggetto. In generale, i miei interessi si trovano all'incrocio tra desideri interni e forze esterne - quell'intersezione è spesso piena di conflitti. Questo pezzo stava cercando di toccarli.



Tony Matelli © Portrait



Tony Matelli, Horse, 2017
Stone, painted bronze 22.5 x 34 x 10 in



AZ:

One thing I like about you is how unpredictable and surprising you can be in visually representing a certain concept or subject and however surreal a certain composition or combination may appear, the message that is conveyed is always firmly anchored to the sphere of the possible, relevant in some way to a reality that one concretely recognizes. It is true that sometimes the best way to speak to something powerful is to powerfully represent its opposite or the inverse positive/negative connotations of a certain concept, but I still believe that your intent is far from simple sensationalism because as far as you can being figurative here the focus is more abstract than ever, you are dealing - in my opinion - with a sphere that tends more inwards than outwards/outwardness. They put you in that school of realist sculpture, to which you certainly belong but it is also certain that your way of representing reality is far from the mere realistic exercise and that is why in my opinion it finally manages to reach as an even more realistic reality. The reality we perceive is on the other hand an abstract concept for us and there is no really realistic way of representing love or what moves one to believe in something, what makes one feel compassion for someone, we, ourselves, are at the mercy of our daily despair and all the implications that come from belonging to the human race.

TM:

Well there is an awful lot here. I like your observation that there is no realistic way of representing love or compassion, that these are abstract concepts, however Hallmark has been trying to do this for decades. An artists job is to reinvent those forms of representation once they've become powerless through overuse or over-understanding.

The realism of my work was never the point. My approach to object making has always been about clarity and precision. The depictions are meant to be fairly seamless. I want someone to initially experience the subject rather than 'reading' it. I want them absorbed in the work. Therefore I feel the presentation of the idea needs to be fairly neutral or even artless. I always talk about my Weed series in this context. I wanted them to be experienced first, as simple weeds. I don't want them to be experienced as sculptures - I hoped there would be very little art mediation. People who haven't seen them before initially engage with them as real weeds, which allows them to function in the mind as a real interloper, strange and out of place. Which is the point.

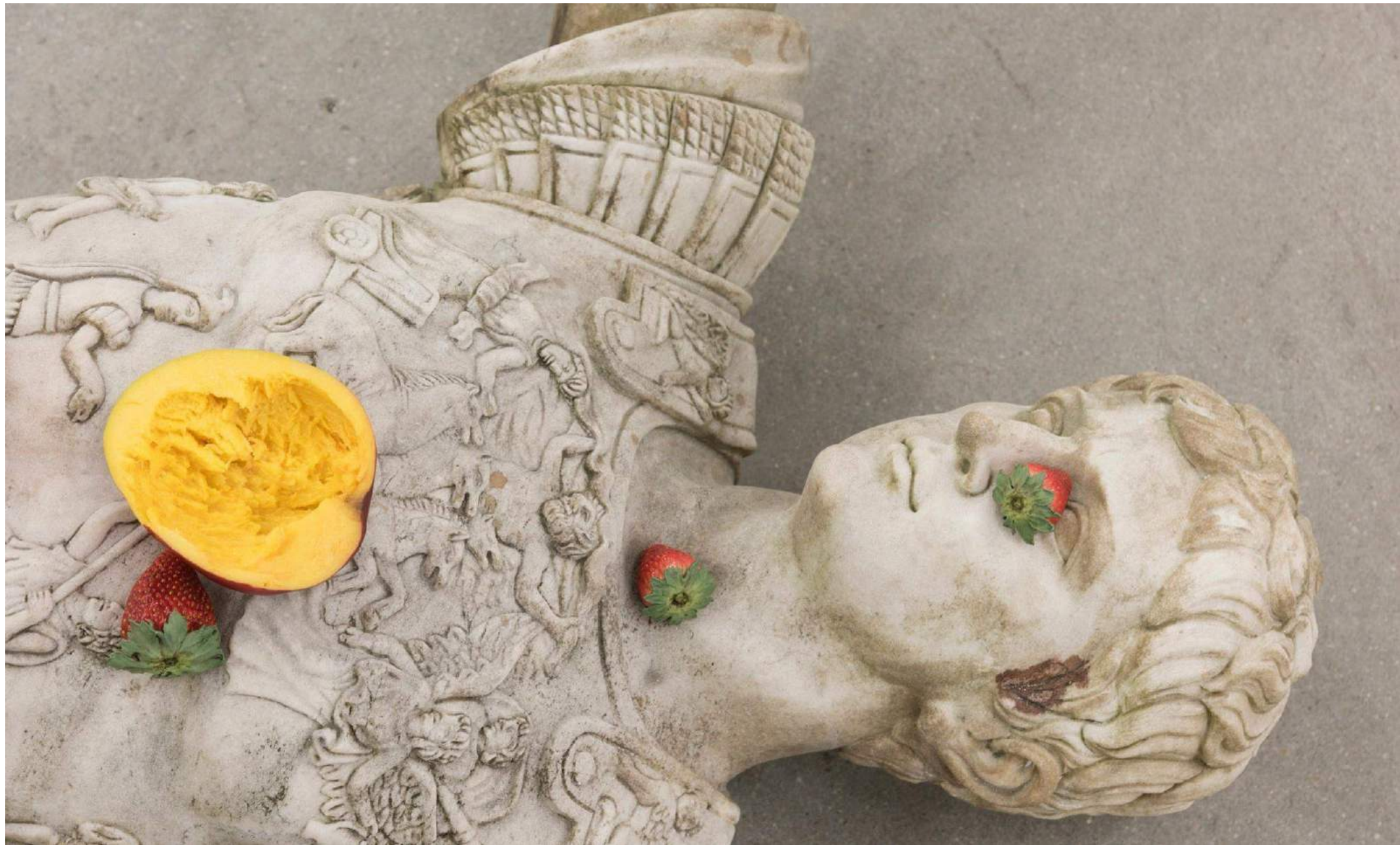
Using realism is just a way for me to get at something else. More and more I want to try to create philosophical problems with the work. I'm trying to get at something unstable and ineffable so I find a very legible starting point helpful.

AZ:

Una cosa che mi piace di te è quanto imprevedibile e sorprendente riesci ad essere nel rappresentare visivamente un determinato concetto o soggetto e per quanto surrealista possa apparire una determinata composizione o accostamento il messaggio che arriva è sempre saldamente ancorato alla sfera del possibile, attinente in qualche modo ad una realtà riconoscibile concretamente. E' vero che a volte il modo migliore per parlare a qualcosa di potente è rappresentare potentemente il suo opposto o le inverse connotazioni positivo/negative di un determinato concetto, ma credo comunque che il tuo intento sia lontano dal semplice sensazionalismo perché per quanto tu possa essere figurativo qui l'oggetto del contendere è più che mai astratto, occupandoti tu - a mio avviso - di una sfera che tende più verso l'interno che l'esterno/esteriorità. Ti iscrivono in quella scuola di scultura realista, alla quale fai certamente parte ma è certo anche che il tuo modo di rappresentare la realtà è lontano dal mero esercizio realistico ed è per questo che a mio avviso riesce ad arrivare, finalmente, quale ancor più realisticamente reale. La realtà che percepiamo è d'altro canto un concetto per noi astratto e non v'è davvero realistico modo di rappresentare l'amore o ciò che mi muove a credere in qualcosa, quel che mi fa provare compassione per qualcuno, noi stessi in balia della nostra quotidiana disperazione e tutte le implicazioni che appartenere al genere umano comporta.

TM:

Ebbene, ci sarebbe tanto da dire. Mi piace la tua osservazione che non esiste un modo realistico di rappresentare l'amore o la compassione, che questi sono concetti astratti, tuttavia Hallmark ha cercato di farlo per decenni. Il lavoro di un artista è reinventare quelle forme di rappresentazione una volta che sono diventate impotenti a causa di un uso eccessivo o di una comprensione eccessiva. Il realismo del mio lavoro non è mai stato il punto. Il mio approccio alla creazione di oggetti è sempre stato basato sulla chiarezza e precisione. Le raffigurazioni sono pensate per essere abbastanza semplici. Voglio che qualcuno trovi inizialmente l'argomento piuttosto che "leggerlo". Voglio che poi sia assorbito nel lavoro. Pertanto ritengo che la presentazione dell'idea debba essere abbastanza neutra o addirittura priva di arte. Parlo sempre della mia serie Weed in questo contesto. Volevo che fossero vissute per prime, come ciò che sono, semplici erbacce. Non voglio che vengano vissute come sculture - speravo che ci sarebbe stata pochissima mediazione artistica. Le persone che non le hanno mai viste prima, inizialmente investono su di loro, a livello di pensiero, come vere erbacce, il che consente loro di funzionare nella mente come un vero intruso, strano e fuori luogo. Usare il realismo è solo un modo per me di arrivare a qualcos'altro. Sempre più voglio provare a creare problemi filosofici con il lavoro. Sto cercando di arrivare a qualcosa di instabile e ineffabile, quindi trovo che una facile leggibilità sia un utile punto di partenza.





Tony Matelli, *Lost and Sick*, 1996, Aqua-resin, FGR, plaster, paint, steel 77 x 101 x 95 inches



Tony Matelli, *The Idiot*, 2011 Polychrome stainless steel n/a



Tony Matelli © Portrait

Tony Matelli, Lion (Pizza), 2019 (Detail) ▶
 Glass fiber reinforced concrete, marble dust, mineral pigments,
 stainless steel, cast urethane, paint
 33 x 61 x 16 in

AZ:

These challenging times have certainly changed our way of perceiving reality and of being in the society with our peers. It seems once again an overturning of reality where the meaning of our gestures is also inverted. To show respect and compassion, now one has to keep distance rather than shorten it, to feel safe one has to isolate rather than fit into a whole. How did you go through this period? What are you working on right now? Are you planning any future projects?

TM:

We are living in an inverted world that's for sure...I think there has been a certain loss of meaning for some of us during this time. The most major moments in our lives are mostly made sense of through community and ritual and we have lost that. I believe we can only fully understand ourselves through others, which requires a level of intimacy and we have lost that too.

AZ:

Questi tempi difficili che ci troviamo ad affrontare, hanno cambiato certamente il nostro modo di percepire la realtà e di stare in società, con i nostri simili. Sembra che ancora una volta sia in atto un capovolgimento del reale dove pure il significato della nostra gestualità è invertito. Per mostrare rispetto e compassione ora bisogna mantenere le distanze anziché accorciarle, per sentirsi sicuri bisogna isolarsi anziché inserirsi in un insieme. Come hai passato questo periodo? A cosa stai lavorando in questo momento? Progetti futuri?

TM:

Viviamo in un mondo invertito, questo è certo ... Penso che ci sia stata una certa perdita di significato per alcuni di noi durante questo periodo. I momenti più importanti della nostra vita hanno un senso per lo più attraverso la comunità ed i rituali e si tratta di qualcosa che ora abbiamo perso. Credo che si possa arrivare a comprendere appieno noi stessi solo attraverso gli altri, il che richiede un certo livello di intimità, anch'esso, al momento, perduto.



Tony Matelli



ARRANGEMENT, 2014 - Painted bronze, MDF

Tony Matelli a sculptor anchored in normality

Approvoiser le travail de Tony Matelli demande un certain recul, un lâcher prise des conventions qui dictent nos manières de regarder l'art contemporain. Ici, l'exercice consiste à revenir sur le principe premier, base d'une véritable création artistique : la conscience humaine.

To appreciate the work of Tony Matelli, it is important to take a step back and to forget all of the conventions that dictate our ways of beholding contemporary art. You have to go back to basics, and remember the foundation of a true artistic creation: human consciousness.

Text: Kuntz Moureau - Photography: © The Artist Courtesy of Tony Matelli LLC

tonymatelli.com

Tony Matelli est américain même si son nom évoque l'Italie. Son grand-père lui a transmis des récits de sa terre natale. Ensuite, il s'est intégré à la culture américaine sans oublier ses origines. En revanche, il a fallu s'adapter, se fondre dans un pays d'adoption. Devenir un citoyen du nouveau monde sans se retourner. Un immigré n'oublie pas ses racines et les générations qui suivent prennent soin, à leur manière, de cet héritage transmis comme d'un lointain parent. De sa période scolaire, il retient la diversité des diaporamas qu'il a dû fabriquer et qui ont contribué à façonner son goût pour les installations narratives. Il décore des modèles miniatures avec une telle précision que la ressemblance avec la réalité est surprenante. Son enfance fourmille d'épiques aventures de la saga « Donjons et Dragons » au cours desquelles son avatar se confronte à de multiples dangers dont il faut ressortir vivant et victorieux. « La première fois que j'ai pris conscience que je venais de créer une œuvre d'art c'est devant *Lost and Sick* (1996). »

His name may sound Italian, but Tony Matelli is American born and bred. Nevertheless, he has childhood memories of his grandfather regaling him with stories about 'il Bel Paese', and how he later embraced American culture without forgetting his roots. He had to adapt in order to integrate in his new country, and ultimately became a citizen of the New World without looking back. Immigrants never forget their roots, and the generations that follow take care of this heritage like an heirloom which has been passed down from a distant relative. Tony's work captures the diversity of the presentations that he had to put together during his school days, which has certainly contributed to his flair for narrative installations. He decorates miniature models with such precision that their resemblance to reality is surprising. His childhood was full of epic 'Dungeons and Dragons' adventures, in which his character faced many different dangers. He had to emerge from them alive and victorious. 'The first time that I realised that I had created a piece of art was when I made *Lost and Sick* (1996).'

▷

ROPE, 2015 - Pigmented silicone and stainless steel



The birth of an artist

Son intérêt pour le volume ainsi que la représentation de l'être humain dans un style hyperréaliste s'ancrent dès cette époque. Depuis lors, Tony Matelli n'a de cesse d'imaginer, pour ses sujets, des scénarios tragiques, violents voir humoristiques. « *En tant qu'artiste, le regard du public ne m'intéresse pas vraiment car ce qui compte c'est qu'en fin de journée, je puisse réaliser ce que je souhaite.* » L'artiste se laisse guider par son seul désir de créer et met tout en œuvre pour y arriver, même si, au final, le travail ne s'avère pas toujours rentable. La satisfaction de l'artiste prime au regard de l'appréciation ou la validation du public. Aujourd'hui, il dirige un studio et malgré de nouvelles composantes financières à satisfaire, rien ne peut restreindre sa créativité.

Au commencement de ses recherches, Tony Matelli a expérimenté de multiples matériaux. Perfectionniste, il a choisi le bronze pour ses qualités : malléable et durable. « *J'aime la connotation historique qu'il renferme.* » Travailler en grandeur nature et plus encore implique une recherche d'excellence pour laquelle le temps ne compte plus. Ciseler, peaufiner chaque détail pour offrir une expérience absolue au regard du public, nécessite un matériau d'une noblesse et d'une endurance idéale.

The era influenced his interest in scale and the representation of human beings in a hyper-realistic style. Since then, Tony Matelli has not stopped imagining tragic, violent, yet humorous situations for his subjects. *'As an artist, I don't really care about what the public thinks. What matters is that, at the end of the day, I can do whatever I want to.'* The artist lets himself be guided by his one wish to be creative and does everything to make it come true, even if the results do not always turn out to be profitable. The satisfaction of the artist has priority over the appreciation or approval of the public. Today he runs a studio, and despite new financial obligations to satisfy, nothing can restrain his creativity.

When he was starting out, Tony Matelli experimented with multiple materials. Ever the perfectionist, he decided on bronze because of its qualities: malleability and resilience. *'I like its historical connotations. Working on a life-size scale or larger is a quest for excellence in which time is not an issue. Chiselling - in other words fine-tuning every detail to offer the best visual experience for the public - requires a material which combines an air of distinction with a perfect degree of endurance.'* ▶

WEED, 2020 - Painted bronze



Some idea of normality

« *Je suis juste un homme normal. Sincèrement ! Mais ce qui est particulier, ce sont les moyens que j'utilise pour m'exprimer.* » Évidemment, pour ceux qui suivent le travail de cet artiste, la normalité ne saute pas vraiment aux yeux. Au contraire, il nous faut réfléchir à ce qu'un homme quelconque peut ressentir un jour ou l'autre dans sa vie. L'ordinaire et la normalité, tels un paravent, occultent cette lutte quotidienne qui maintient notre équilibre. Aussi paisibles que peuvent paraître certaines œuvres, le message sous-jacent comporte toujours un dilemme existentiel. La vie ne se conçoit qu'au regard de la mort, c'est tellement simple que l'on fait tout pour l'oublier.

Les mauvaises herbes qui sont mises à l'honneur depuis plusieurs années sont des preuves quasi vivantes de l'esprit d'endurance que possède Tony Matelli. Nous avons décrété qu'il existe de plantes bénéfiques, d'une beauté attractive d'un côté et de l'autre de mauvaises que nous dédaignons et éradiquons avec force. C'est sans compter sur leur extraordinaire pouvoir de renaissance. Les présenter comme des œuvres d'art matérialisées en bronze est une consécration ultime. « *Grâce à ses petites sculptures hyperréalistes, j'ai incarné une idée qui dès lors s'impose directement au public sans médiation.* »

'I am just a normal guy. Honestly! But what makes me unique is the way in which I express myself.' Evidently, normality does not jump out at followers of this artist. On the contrary, we need to think about how an ordinary person might feel on one day or the next. Like a screen, the ordinary and normal obscures this daily struggle that maintains our balance. As peaceful as some of Matelli's works may seem, the underlying message always relates to an existential dilemma. It is only natural that we do all we can to forget that life and death go hand in hand.

The abandoned weeds that have been on display for several years are almost living proof of Tony Matelli's spirit of endurance. We have determined that there are beautiful 'beneficial plants' on the one hand, and bad ones - which we despise and forcefully eradicate - on the other hand. We do that without thinking about their extraordinary power of rebirth. Presenting them as works of art, made of bronze, is the ultimate accolade. *'These small hyper-realistic sculptures represent an idea that immediately imposes itself on the public without mediation.'* ▶

YESTERDAY, 2019 - Painted bronze, rub on transfers, urethane, beer can, painted steel



Underlying surrealism

La Belgique est une des patries de ce mouvement artistique libérateur de la pensée et de la bienséance initié par André Breton. « *La façon dont j'utilise l'hyper-réalisme est liée de façon très intime au surréalisme.* » Ce rapprochement peut se ressentir dans l'inversion simple des pots de fleurs et plantes qui seront présentés lors de l'Armory Show en septembre 2021. Tout est précisément reproduit mais permuté pour contrer l'action de la gravité. L'objet contient l'idée et rien de plus. Contrairement à la peinture, ce type de sculpture ne propose pas de filtre et s'offre telle quelle au public. « *Le procédé de fabrication disparaît complètement. Le savoir-faire s'efface pour ne laisser place qu'à l'existence pleine et entière du végétal.* » L'humour, l'allégorie se retrouve dans la sculpture « Yesterday ». « *Il faut y voir une tension entre l'équilibre et le déséquilibre de ce château de carte.* » La concentration qu'il a fallu pour exécuter ce montage pervers par les cannettes de bières et les restes de « junk food ». Les effluves d'une fête alcoolisée ainsi que la déchéance humaine qui a dû en résulter. Cette œuvre nous évoque une journée que l'on ferait peut-être mieux d'oublier et la perte de temps perdu à jamais.

Belgium is one of the homelands of this artistic movement, which was initiated by André Breton and liberates thought and propriety. *'The way I use hyper-realism is very intimately linked to surrealism.'* This approach can be felt in the simple inversion of the flowerpots and plants that will be on display at the Armory Show (a.k.a. the International Exhibition of Modern Art) in September 2021. Everything is precisely reproduced, but changed to defy the laws of gravity. The piece contains an idea and nothing more. Unlike a painting, this type of sculpture is open to interpretation, and is presented to the public as it is. *'The manufacturing process completely vanishes. The expertise is erased to leave room for the full existence of the plant.'* The sculpture "Yesterday" is humorous and allegorical. *'You have to see the tension between the balance and the imbalance of this house of cards.'* The concentration needed to build a structure like this is ruined by beer cans and leftover junk food. The piece carries the scent of a great booze up and the human degradation that must have resulted from it. The whole thing reminds us of a day that is probably better best forgotten, and of wasted time that we will never get back. ▶



FOUR SEASONS (Autumn), 2018 - Marble, painted bronze

CAESAR (detail), 2018 - Marble, painted bronze, painted urethane, installed in Galería Hilario Galguera - Photography: George Newall



The concept of life and death

Ce concept ne peut être éludé face aux sculptures exposées. « *Je ne pense pas à ma mort ou à la mort d'un individu en particulier mais beaucoup de choses meurent comme l'amitié, les cultures et les idées.* » En l'occurrence, la référence est plus conceptuelle que physique. L'idée d'une mort est incluse dans un cycle de renaissance à l'instar du déroulement d'une journée. Du lever au coucher, de la naissance à la mort, chaque jour est nouveau. « *L'Ego meurt et le soi renaît et ainsi de suite.* » La similitude avec le cycle des renaissances de la philosophie bouddhique émerge mais est tempérée par une pensée romantique et narrative. Chaque journée, nous luttons contre le désordre et le chaos qui peut surgir inopinément plutôt que de l'accepter avec résignation. C'est le principe d'entropie auquel les œuvres s'opposent puisqu'elles sont une suite d'instantanés figés dans le temps, à l'image des instantanés photographiques. « *Le choix d'utiliser l'hyper-réalisme m'aide à garder le concept à l'avant-plan et à laisser l'art ou il devrait être, scellé à l'intérieur de l'œuvre et non à la surface.* » Il est essentiel que l'idée jaillisse et qu'ensuite l'interprétation, personnelle ou pas, se dévoile subtilement. Tony Matelli suit son instinct, peaufine son langage stylistique. L'énergie vitale s'ancre au creux des œuvres et ne se révèle qu'à celui qui peut la ressentir en suivant son cheminement intérieur.

This concept cannot be avoided when looking at the sculptures on display. *'I don't think of my own death, or that of anyone in particular; but so many things die, such as friendships, cultures and ideas.'* In this regard, the reference is more conceptual than physical. The idea of death is included in a cycle of rebirth, which is not unlike the dawning of a new day. From sunrise to sunset, from cradle to tomb, every day is a new start. When the ego dies, the soul is reborn, and so on. There are similarities to the cycle of rebirth from Buddhist philosophy, but these are tempered by romantic and narrative thinking. Every day, we struggle with the confusion and chaos that can arise unexpectedly, rather than accept it all with resignation. Matelli's works go against the principle of entropy, as they are a series of moments frozen in time, just like snapshots. *'Choosing to use hyper-realism helps me to focus on the concept and to keep the art where it should be - sealed within the piece, and not on the surface.'* It is essential that the idea emerges and that the beholder's interpretation, irrespective of whether it is personal or not, then unfolds subtly. Tony Matelli follows his instinct and refines his design language. Vital energy is anchored in the heart of his works, and is revealed only to those who can feel it by setting out on their inner journey. □

10 expositions en galerie à courir visiter depuis leur réouverture

NUMÉRO ART

Heureuse nouvelle pour la France : enfin, quelques expositions peuvent rouvrir leurs portes, permettant au monde de l'art de reprendre petit à petit son activité. Si la plupart des musées et grandes institutions sont pour l'heure encore fermés, les galeries sont, depuis la semaine dernière, de plus en plus nombreuses à accueillir (avec précaution) leur public et ainsi leur permettre de découvrir des expositions souvent avortées, annulées ou reportées. Focus sur dix expositions proposées par des galeries parisiennes, à visiter en cette période de déconfinement.

Par **Matthieu Jacquet**

10. Tony Matelli à la galerie Andréhn-Schiptjenko



Tony Matelli, *Weeds* (2020). Painted bronze, 71.1 x 25.4 x 30.5 cm. Courtesy the artist and Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm/Paris.



Tony Matelli, *"Weed 504"* (2020). Painted bronze, 45.7 x 25.4 x 27.9 cm. Courtesy the artist and Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm/Paris.

Lorsque l'on pénètre l'espace de la galerie Andréhn-Schiptjenko, on est immédiatement frappé par un constat étonnant : le vide de la pièce. Aucune œuvre aux murs, suspendue ni au sol, mais quatre plantes émergent de sous les murs, prenant racine sous les plinthes de ce *white cube*. Sur certaines de ces tiges grimpantes et feuillues éclorent quelques fleurs bleues, comme l'image d'une nouvelle vie bourgeonnante à l'heure de la fin d'un printemps, cette année, très particulier. Face à une nature qui reprend visiblement ses droits dans l'espace de la galerie, on peine à comprendre tout de suite que les œuvres sont en réalité devant nos yeux : ces plantes et herbes qui semblent pousser sont en réalité factices, plastiques pourrait-on se dire, mais il n'en est rien. Leur créateur, l'Américain Tony Matelli, les sculpte dans le bronze qu'il peint ensuite à la main, donnant à ces pièces uniques aux airs fragile une solidité inédite. L'illusion est complète et déroutante.

Tony Matelli, *Abandon*, jusqu'au 11 juillet à la galerie Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris 3e.

BeauxArts

GALERIE ANDRÉHN-SCHIPTJENKO

Mauvaises herbes dans le white cube

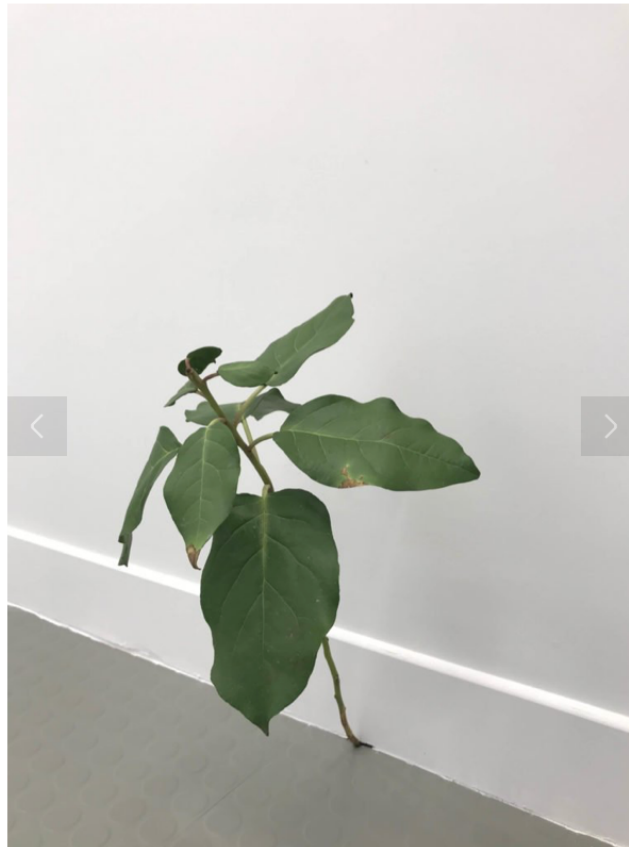
Par **Inès Boittiaux** • le 13 mai 2020



Tony Matelli, *Abandon*, 2020 ⓘ

À la **galerie Andréhn-Schiptjenko à Paris**, qui vient de rouvrir ses portes après deux mois de fermeture forcée, les mauvaises herbes ont profité du confinement pour s'emparer du white cube. C'est là, sous la lumière aveuglante des néons, que Tony Matelli a planté son installation, intitulée « Abandon ». Plantée, car le sculpteur américain a reproduit des herbes folles plus vraies que nature, à l'échelle, à ceci près qu'ici fleurs et feuilles sont... en bronze !

Éminemment poétique, l'œuvre de Matelli rappelle une image devenue familière du confinement, débuté quelques jours à peine avant l'arrivée du printemps : celle de la nature qui, dans les villes à l'arrêt, a repris ses droits sur le bitume. Jadis arrachées, aspergées de pesticides, les mauvaises herbes ont ainsi poussé aux quatre coins des rues, s'épanouissant le long d'un mur ou dans le creux d'une fissure, semblant jaillir de partout mais surtout de nulle part. Libre, enfin, de respirer, là où l'Homme, de la rue à la galerie, est désormais contraint d'avancer masqué.



Tony Matelli, *Abandon*, 2020 ⓘ

© Tony Matelli

→ Tony Matelli. Abandon

Du 19 mars 2020 au 11 juillet 2020

www.andrehn-schiptjenko.com

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TONY MATELLI : « JE ME CONSIDÈRE MOINS COMME UN SCULPTEUR QUE COMME UN FAISEUR D'IMAGES »

Les « mauvaises herbes » de l'artiste américain chez Andréhn-Schiptjenko, font écho à celles qui poussent dans les rues de Paris depuis quelques semaines.

PARIS. Ce jour d'avril où nous nous parlons au téléphone, Tony Matelli travaille seul dans son atelier new-yorkais, alors qu'il est habituellement entouré de six assistants. Le 19 mars, son exposition à Paris n'a pas ouvert. La rue Sainte-Anastase (3^e) est déserte, comme le reste de la ville. Devant la vitrine, une mauvaise herbe a poussé, étrange invitation à regarder à travers la grille fermée l'exposition dont l'accrochage venait de s'achever. Dans « Abandon », un titre choisi bien avant que la crise sanitaire n'éclate, Tony Matelli présente de nouvelles *Weeds* en bronze, appartenant à la série qu'il a commencée en 1995.

LA VIE ET LA MORT MÊLÉES

« En un sens, c'est un moment morbide parfaitement adapté... Évidemment, nous n'avions pas prévu la concomitance de l'exposition avec l'épidémie, mais la poésie est là », raconte-t-il à propos de ces herbes qui portent en elles la vie et la mort, mêlées. « Ce travail n'est pas censé être aussi théâtral qu'il l'est probablement, mais une certaine théâtralité s'en dégage néanmoins. L'aspect narratif, qui consiste à regarder dans la galerie fermée, j'avais même imaginé que la lumière reste allumée toute la nuit, mais c'était évidemment une mauvaise idée ! Il y a quelques années, j'avais montré les *Weeds* derrière une vitre scellée, dans une des galeries latérales du Whitney Museum of American Art. »

Tony Matelli a commencé sa série *Weeds* alors qu'il venait d'installer

son atelier à New York. En 2000, il s'est mis à les réaliser en bronze, et c'est à la State University of New York à Buffalo qu'il en a pour la première fois montré un ensemble. « Au début, je les réalisais en papier et en fil de fer. Les suivantes ont été faites en plastique, elles étaient belles, mais pas très durables ni très précises. Il leur manquait une sorte d'objectalité (objecthood). Je ramasse des plantes, j'en moule chaque brin, je les polis et les peins, puis je les assemble, avec mes assistants qui travaillent à mes côtés depuis longtemps. En bronze, c'est devenu plus substantiel, plus spectaculaire. Le bronze est ce qu'il est. Ce sont toutes des pièces uniques résultant d'un assemblage différent. »

« La première Weed véhiculait des idées politiques que j'avais à l'époque : ma position en retrait du monde de l'art notamment, le sentiment d'une certaine déconnexion. »

Par leur simplicité, qui cache une extrême sophistication dans l'usage des matériaux et la production des œuvres, les *Weeds* peuvent faire penser aux sculptures de Charles Ray. Mais la notion même de sculpture n'est pas au cœur des recherches de Tony Matelli, et c'est plutôt à d'autres aspects de son travail qu'il associe l'inspiration de Charles Ray. En revanche, il raconte souvent la façon dont Duane Hanson l'a profondément inspiré, lors d'une visite scolaire au Milwaukee Art Museum, lorsqu'il était enfant : « Nous visitons aussi les musées de Chicago, mais ils n'avaient pas de Duane Hanson. Le Janitor de Milwaukee est vraiment l'une de ses meilleures pièces ! Il y a quelque chose dans la posture décontractée de ce personnage, dans sa nature situationnelle, qui fait que l'on vit avec lui. Charles Ray, au contraire, garde toujours une distance théâtrale avec ses œuvres. Dans les *Weeds*, je veux que se confondent absolument l'idée de l'œuvre et ma propre réalité. Même si, quand on est enfant, on pense peu les situations de façon abstraite, je me suis rendu compte que tout ce qu'il y avait d'autre dans cette salle de musée se réduisait à des signes,



qui montraient des idées au lieu de les incarner. »

Tony Matelli est loin du botaniste contemporain, et il est également loin de Mark Dion, dont les vitrines imitent les musées d'histoire naturelle. D'ailleurs, il ne s'intéresse jamais au nom savant des mauvaises herbes : « Il y a un aspect conceptuel à être une mauvaise herbe ! » – une élégance vagabonde et romantique aussi. Matelli a souvent dit son goût pour les tableaux de Pieter Bruegel et les brins d'herbe d'Albrecht Dürer. On pense encore aux feuilles de fraisier au bord des retables de Hans Memling, mais le symbolisme des plantes, en jeu dans ces images, lui est étranger. Ce qui l'intéresse chez ces peintres, c'est plutôt la manière dont on peut lire leurs images pour en raconter les histoires.

DES SCULPTURES D'UNE QUALITÉ PHOTOGRAPHIQUE

Le processus est toujours le même : sur le chemin entre chez lui et son atelier, Tony Matelli ramasse des herbes sauvages dont il aime la forme, et dont il considère qu'il pourra les reproduire facilement. Les Harvard Art Museums possèdent une extraordinaire collection de modèles scientifiques de plantes

en verre, des objets qui le fascinent mais qu'il ne cherche en rien à imiter. « Si je pouvais atteindre leur perfection, je le ferais et, d'ailleurs, j'améliore ma précision avec le temps. Je veux surtout que mes *Weeds* résonnent sur un plan émotionnel. C'est la manière dont je les installe qui est déterminante, la manière dont elles interagissent avec l'espace, non comme des spécimens doués de vertus didactiques, mais comme des expériences situationnellement orientées. » C'est cela aussi qui leur confère leur accent romantique, outre les morsures d'insectes et les marques du temps qu'elles portent à la manière de vanités.

Cet aspect les rend assez différentes d'une autre part de l'œuvre de Tony Matelli, plus mordante et acerbe sur le monde contemporain. « Une de mes pièces, *Fuck It Free Yourself*, qui montre des billets de banque en train de brûler, a un peu la même tonalité que les *Weeds*, alors que le reste de mon travail a quelque chose de plus narratif, de plus ironique ou satirique. Mes recherches récentes se rapprochent plutôt des *Weeds*, dans leur absence de narration. Aujourd'hui, c'est vraiment la qualité de l'image qui m'intéresse, comme en photographie. »

Ci-contre : Tony Matelli, *Abandon*, 2020, installation, galerie Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris. Courtesy de l'artiste et Andréhn-Schiptjenko

En bas : Tony Matelli, *Weed 504*, 2020, bronze peint. Courtesy de l'artiste et Andréhn-Schiptjenko

Peut-être y a-t-il même, dans cette pratique au long cours, liée à la marche autour de l'atelier, une dimension méditative particulièrement intime ? « Je n'avais jamais pensé à cette série comme à une méditation, mais je crois en effet que c'est le cas. La première *Weed* véhiculait mes idées politiques de l'époque : ma position en retrait du monde de l'art notamment, le sentiment d'une certaine déconnexion, d'un isolement d'un milieu social. Les *Weeds* avaient aussi cette charge de rébellion, de volonté de survie et de persévérance. Pour un jeune artiste qui arrivait à New York sans connaître personne, c'était très fort, et ce sont des sentiments que j'éprouve encore de temps en temps. » Faisant référence à une autre de ses sculptures, *The Sleepwalker*, dont il rapproche volontiers les *Weeds*, Tony Matelli évoque également un sentiment de décalage, celui d'être au mauvais endroit au mauvais moment : « Une mauvaise herbe ne serait pas une mauvaise herbe si elle était au bon endroit ! »

Immobilisées dans un courant d'air et dans le temps, les *Weeds* ont cette qualité photographique dont Matelli parle souvent. Il faut en général leur faire face pour en prendre la mesure. « Je ne pense pas les trois dimensions, je me considère moins comme un sculpteur que comme un faiseur d'images, que je colle et déplace. Cette production a quelque chose qui "résiste à la décoration", au sens où elle offre une friction entre l'espace et nos corps. Quand j'installe ces œuvres qui se répètent dans le temps avec de petites différences, il y a une sorte de stratégie de minimalisme. Ce que l'on voit est ce que l'on voit... »

ANAËL PIGEAT

« Tony Matelli. *Abandon* », Andréhn-Schiptjenko, 10, rue Sainte-Anastase, 75003 Paris, andrehn-schiptjenko.com (consulter le site pour une ouverture ultérieure de l'exposition)





'WEED': OEUVRE D'ART OU MAUVAISE HERBE?

par THIJS DEMEULEMEESTER

28 mars 2019 10:46

Marie-Jo Lafontaine, artiste, photographe et vidéaste, nous parle de 'Weed', une oeuvre de Tony Matelli.

Il y a une bonne dose d'humour dans cette touffe de mauvaise herbe, non? Je la trouve marrante. En même temps, elle sème le doute. Que fait-elle là? Va-t-on la laisser pousser? Certaines personnes qui viennent ici pour la première fois me posent ce genre de questions. D'autres se taisent et n'en pensent pas moins. Je ne dis rien non plus: c'est amusant de sentir cette tension.

Tony Matelli crée de parfaites copies de mauvaises herbes, en bronze. Même les feuilles frisées et séchées sont magnifiquement imitées. Il a réalisé toute une série de 'Weed'. Je ne veux pas trop intellectualiser, mais en élevant les mauvaises herbes au rang d'art, il nous fait réfléchir sur notre relation avec la nature et à ce que nous trouvons sans valeur ou, au contraire, précieux. Devrions-nous élever la nature au rang d'oeuvre d'art pour en prendre davantage soin? C'est aussi un clin d'oeil ironique qui relativise le monde de l'art. Qui voudrait des mauvaises herbes chez soi?"

Cette oeuvre est un clin d'oeil ironique qui relativise le monde de l'art. Qui voudrait des mauvaises herbes chez soi?

"J'achète uniquement des oeuvres contemporaines car, pour moi, l'art doit refléter la société d'aujourd'hui. Dans toutes les oeuvres de ma collection, il y a une sorte de joie de vivre. Acheter de l'art, c'est me faire plaisir. Être entourée d'oeuvres fascinantes me rend heureuse. Je n'ai pas de budget défini: j'achète quand j'en ai les moyens ou quand j'ai un vrai coup de coeur."

"Je ne pourrais pas vivre entourée de mes propres oeuvres, ce serait comme si je me regardais tout le temps dans un miroir. Par contre, dans mon atelier, il n'y a pas d'oeuvres d'autres artistes car je tiens à créer dans mon cocon, sans trop d'interférences de l'extérieur."

J'achète uniquement de l'art qui déclenche une émotion en moi, ou comme le sourire que me donne cette mauvaise herbe. Parfois un achat est lié à ce que j'ai vécu ou l'objet de mon travail à ce moment-là. Quand je travaillais sur la manipulation génétique ou les photos d'adolescents, j'étais plus touchée par ces deux thèmes interprétés par d'autres artistes."

"Je n'accroche pas d'oeuvres d'art pour éviter de placer la barre trop haut ou pour me comparer à d'autres. Pour moi, l'art n'est pas un investissement; c'est du bien-être. Quand je dépose une oeuvre, elle laisse un vide, physiquement et mentalement. Vendre une oeuvre ne me viendrait pas à l'esprit. Je suis attachée aux oeuvres qui m'entourent. Elles me rendent heureuse."

Exposition solo de Marie-Jo Lafontaine, "Troubled Waters!" à [Bozar](#) à 1000 Bruxelles, jusqu'au 26 mai.

Tony Matelli (1971) est un sculpteur américain dont la sculpture controversée 'Sleepwalker' a fait la notoriété (la représentation hyperréaliste d'un somnambule de taille humaine). Dans ses sculptures désarmantes, Matelli combine humour et associations surréalistes. Il est représenté par *Marlborough Contemporary* (Londres) et *Stephane Simoens* (Knokke).

Fruitful Potentials: Tony Matelli

February 13, 2019



C-P: You were saying how your run with Andréhn-Schiptjenko stretches back nearly twenty years, if not actually twenty this year. Given that this also marks your sixth solo with the gallery, I'm curious to ask about your history with the gallery.

T.M: The first show I did with the gallery some twenty years ago wasn't my first international show but it certainly was among my first very important ones, doing a proper gallery show with an established gallery. I think the gallery got in touch with me, likely having seen the work I was doing then at an art fair or it might as well have been my first gallerist Stefano Basilico who got us in contact. They invited me to do my first solo here in 1999, which I guess is in fact will be twenty years ago. Thinking back, I was so nervous about it then. We shipped some works that were still unfinished that I got around to completing at the gallery and it is funny to think that for this show too, I'm still finishing works in my hotel room in Stockholm and at the gallery only days prior to the opening.

C-P: Where in your career in relation to graduating from art school will this have been? Had you already been working as an artist for some time?

T.M: I'd done about two shows in New York but I actually got started quite young. When I got out of graduate school it was maybe a year or two until I had my first solo. Things went quite quickly. I wasn't quite confident to start about how to run a studio practice with an international exhibiting schedule, after transitioning from school, with everything that comes along with that. It was pretty early though, I was still quite fresh.

C-P: Can you recognize that one pivotal moment early on, where it dawned on you that things were happening for you in your career?



T.M: As far as my first show goes it was always something I expected to happen for me while at school. There was always an idea in mind that this would come to happen no matter what, with the question instead being when. In a way, my momentum coming out of school was so strong that it didn't really feel like there was ever a break between graduate school and showing as an artist. I didn't have enough of a break to feel that it was starting to pick up again at a certain point and rather it just felt like a continuation from where I left school.

C-P: The work you are doing today, does it relate still to what you were doing at graduate school or has it deviated significantly in other directions since then as can be imagined?

T.M: I would say I started making mature work in my last month at graduate school considering how I see myself as an artist today. Before that I was making very different kinds of work and then again I think the role of a student essentially is to try out many different languages to see what really fits. You are trying out various ideas to find yourself. When you find something that all of a sudden makes sense and you find a clarity and a sort of harmony with the world; that will be the right kind of language for you. That happened late in graduate school for me and since then more or less has been a continuation. I of course work in various bodies of work that are different from the other but there is always a recurring conceptual thread that finds its way through all the work that I do. I've had radical shifts in the mood of the work but you can see an aesthetic and sensibility that has been quite consistent.



C-P: I think many people, myself included, think of figurative and human-like hyperreal sculptural bodies that have a unsettling air about them, when thinking of you as an artist. I would imagine you will have had quite strong reactions to some of your work over time, there is your *Sleepwalker* for example. Where I'm getting at is asking if you can recall a particular moment that significantly confronted you with the perception other people have of the work you've put out?

T.M: One thing I can reference; and this is an old reference; when I was still in graduate school a fellow student said something that has guided my career since then. She said something along the lines of my work being so cold and dull while myself being so vibrant and interesting and wondered how I reconciled the two. The question I guess was why I was making certain kind of work while obviously to her being a different kind of person than the work itself. I thought she was right and I acknowledged that it was a façade and my pretending to be interested in making certain art and that's when a shift started to happen in my approach in making art that is more romantic and more autobiographical, deriving from my own experiences and feelings about the world.

Sleepwalker which you mention in regard to your question is one of the works I made that sparked quite some controversy or perhaps intense interest you could say.

C-P: What sort of comment about the world and present conditions did that particular work aim to make?

T.M: To me that is a work about crisis; a depiction of a person in crisis who is out of sorts with themselves. A person who is in obvious need of help and empathy. It's a depiction of a person who is both simultaneously there and not there at the same time which has a lot of political and emotional resonance forme. That series of work has always been about that; to represent a moment that is not one thing or another, but rather two things at the very same time. That's always a good place for an artwork to be; to in one image represent two completely different things.

C-P: What are the locations where *Sleepwalker* has been out in public?



T.M: One was on Wellesley College campus outside of Boston where it was confronted with a lot of hostility. It had to do with a lot of things. Around that time in the US there was a discourse that was happening at college campuses around the notions of trauma, trigger-warnings and personal safe spaces. There was a general idea that the students at a school should be able to dictate the curriculum, but the adults at that school did not live up to their end of the bargain; by saying "No you are students and children, young adults; let us adults handle your education". That happens all over campuses right now; a pathology in the US. So the *Sleepwalker* happened there around that time.

It was a women's college and the students hated it, for instance since it is a representation of a man which some people were very uncomfortable by but moreover it's also sensitively rendered which gave people quite a visceral reaction to it. When the students complained against it and the faculty didn't want to listen, the students went absolutely apoplectic and eventually vandalized it and made a petition against it online.

C-P: How does something like this affect you personally as the author of the work? I remember this, it was so worldwide.

T.M: To me it was mind-blowing and all of this was happening when I was there. The headline wrote itself: "Women's college terrorized by a sculpture of a man". To me the controversy had so little to do with the work so it didn't affect me negatively. I knew for these students it was going to happen no matter what was in that environment; it was waiting to happen and with me showing up there it was really just the moment in time for it.



C-P: There's also your sculptural presentations that have this apparent gravity-defying character that I would think many people pin to you as a signature trait?

T.M: I think of it as a psychedelic realism. I'm not a drug user but what I find interesting about a LSD trip or a mind-altering trip is that it allows you to remove content from physical reality. What I like about the inverted sculptures I've done is that it tries to do just that. Making something just as hyperreal as I can possibly make it and yet one mere element is altered and it abstracts the whole thing. So very little

has changed about the reality except for the one thing that completely changes how you perceive the object. I see now that this is a feature in a lot of my work; not necessarily in all of it but in much. And this quality is something that I quite like about the work when I stand back and look at it; something that feels both real, meaningful and important to do in the world and which is something I want to think of a lot more.

C-P: What can be said about this current body of work featured in the exhibition at the gallery where you juxtapose figures that bear the look of classical figurative sculptures with seemingly organic edibles like fruits and vegetables? Why this choice?

T.M: Something else that is distinctive that binds many of my bodies of works together is the idea that they reflect on the passage of time; many of the works have both something that is fresh and something that appears rotted or is suspended in time somehow. There are many freeze moments in light of time in my work. For this sculptural series I wanted to put two cultural artifacts together; one that is absolutely ephemeral; the perishable object which can be the head of roman lettuce or fresh grapefruit. Then you have the other highly elevated cultural artifact that is more an eternal object; the statutory that speaks so much about our class-based relationship with culture. So you have two objects together; one of importance and one of almost no importance that is only on the earth for very short amount of time. What does it say about time?

I get a feeling of my body with them because I feel my own kind of decay within the decay of the antiquated figures. The statuary components of the works represent something at the end of their life; something that reached its full potential while the components that depict food represent something at their very peak and at the height of potential. And food is one of those things where we are so very consumed with its age. We always ask in terms of food if it is at the peak of freshness. Is it still good? A fresh piece of food is the very epitome of potential. The simple act of putting those two things together has meaning I believe, and strikes me as the perfect balance to address these things like time and the potential of things.



Images of artworks and installations at the gallery; photo credit: Jean-Baptiste Béranger
Courtesy of Andréhn-Schiptjenko and the artist

Tony Matelli's ongoing solo exhibition at Andréhn-Schiptjenko runs through March 9 at the venue of the gallery of Linnégatan 31 in Stockholm

www.tonymatelli.com
www.andrehschiptjenko.com

AnOther

The Artist Who Set the Scene for Margiela's First Artisanal Men's Show

FASHION & BEAUTY / IN PICTURES



Soldier © Tony Matelli, photographed at Maison Margiela Artisanal Men's

Appearances can be deceiving, writes Liam Hess – both in sculptor Tony Matelli's fruit-scattered classical statues, and in John Galliano's own opulent ease

JULY 06, 2018

TEXT Liam Hess

In the surprise podcast episode released before the debut of his first 'Artisanal' collection for men, John Galliano explained his desire to "discover a new sensuality, a new sexuality" within the more limited vocabulary of menswear. While this might seem almost contradictory, Galliano's vision at **Maison Margiela** has been consistently defined by these artful, considered clashes – an alchemical ability to take disparate elements that would seem impossible companions on paper, then mash them up to create something strangely appealing. Applying the couture-level skills of his atelier to the staples of every man's wardrobe, he delivered a rollercoaster of tweed blazers and utilitarian overalls styled over sensual, feminine details such as wasp waist corsets and tulle-covered peekaboos.



GALLERY / 6 IMAGES

Maison Margiela Artisanal Menswear

A greater surprise came by way of the set: there were red PVC strip curtains you might expect to see at the entrance of an industrial freezer, hung off skeletal scaffolding and punctuated with artworks by American artist **Tony Matelli**. The sculptures, inspired by classical statuary, were littered with half-eaten fruit. Staged at the Margiela atelier in the buzzy neighbourhood of Belleville, Matelli's work was more than just a striking addition to the catwalk mise-en-scène: it also shed light on some of Galliano's quieter design aspirations.



Hera © Tony Matelli, photographed at Maison Margiela Artisanal Men's

There are plenty of parallels to draw between Matelli's art and Galliano's designs. Both play with the history of their disciplines – in Matelli's case, taking sculptures from classical antiquity; for Galliano, Vionnet-inspired bias-cut draping – and then rehashing them to become bracingly new. There's also a distinct undercurrent of the absurd: whether the painted bronze split mangoes and orange peel balanced across Greco-Roman busts, or the patent leather belts and high-waisted skinny trousers delivered in kitschy pastels.

Perhaps Matelli reveals that we've got Galliano's tenure at Margiela all wrong. It's more than just a flirtation with the absurd: it's an all-out, cheeky sense of humour. Marabou trims and elbow-high marigold gloves aren't details you would spot at any other house in a season dominated by streetwear, but for Galliano these provocative elements are a two-fingers-up to the menswear status quo. As Matelli perhaps does more literally by taking works from the canon of art history and covering them in decomposing fruit, Galliano deliberately pokes fun at the dominant hierarchies of good and bad taste.



Diana © Tony Matelli, photographed at Maison Margiela Artisanal Men's

The French Surrealists infamously distilled their artistic ambitions with the metaphor of a sewing machine and an umbrella meeting on a dissecting table, explained later by Max Ernst as "a linking of two realities that by all appearances have nothing to link them, in a setting that by all appearances does not fit them". More broadly, any comedian would tell you that the best jokes land by drawing together two unexpected people, places or objects that by some hilarious twist of fate end up occupying the same world. When everything in menswear has been done before, it's only by these unlikely juxtapositions that new ideas are sparked – something Galliano understands better than anyone else.

What makes this mischievous wit more than just a gimmick, however, is the virtuosic technical skill on show. Matelli's fruits aren't made on the cheap: they are cast from bronze then meticulously hand-painted to resemble the real thing. Working on the bias is one of the most notoriously difficult skills for any designer to master, even within the realm of womenswear – to effortlessly apply it to men's tailoring with such a lightness of touch is nothing short of extraordinary. These are chimerical clothes for a modern dandy – a flamboyant update on the overdone menswear codes – and the bravura execution of Matelli's sculptures only hammers this home.



Bust © Tony Matelli, photographed at Maison Margiela Artisanal Men's

Whether one is likely to see your average menswear customer walking down the street wearing all of this is beside the point: they exist in an alternate, paradoxical universe, both steeped in history and boldly new. By inviting Matelli to share his stage, Galliano only makes it even clearer there's nobody else operating on his radical, quick-witted wavelength.

Andréhn-Schiptjenko

STOCKHOLM PARIS

TONY MATELLI

Born 1971 in Chicago, USA.

Lives and works in New York, USA.

www.tonymatelli.com

Education

1995 M.F.A., Cranbrook Academy of Art, Michigan, USA.

1993 B.F.A., Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design,
Wisconsin, USA.

1991 Alliance of Independent Colleges of Art - Independent
Study, New York, USA.

Solo Exhibitions

2023 *Displacement Map*, Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris, France.
Timelines, Maruani Mercier Gallery, Brussels, Belgium.

2022 *Arrangements*, Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, USA.

2020 *Abandon*, Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris, France.
Tony Matelli, Alone Gallery, East Hampton, USA.

2019 Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden.

2018 *Lapses*, Pilevneli Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey.
I Hope All Is Well..., 500 Capp Street,
San Francisco, USA.

2017 *Garden*, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum,
Ridgefield, USA.

2016 *Realisms*, The State Hermitage Museum,
St. Petersburg, Russia.

2015 *Garden*, Marlborough Chelsea, New York, USA.

2014 *Tony Matelli: New Gravity*, the Davis, Wellesley College,
Wellesley, USA.

2013 Stephane Simoens Contemporary, Knokke, Belgium.
White Flag Projects, Saint Louis, USA.

Tony Matelli - A Human Echo Bergen kunstmuseum,
Bergen, Norway.

Green Gallery, Milwaukee, USA.

2012 Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden.

Tony Matelli - A Human Echo, ARoS Aarhus
Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark.

Tony Matelli, Leo Koenig Inc., New York, USA.

2011 *Tony Matelli: Mirror Paintings*, Leo Koenig Inc., New York,
co-curated by Rita Kersting and Marc Gloede, Art Berlin
Contemporary, Berlin, Germany.

The Idiots, Leo Koenig Projekte New York, USA.

Dissipated Island, Leo Koenig Projekte, New York, USA.

Tony Matelli, Kunstraum Bethanien, Berlin, Germany.

Falken Rot Preis, Kunstlerhaus Bethanien,
Berlin, Germany.

2010 *Mise en Abyme*, Stephane Simoens Contemporary Fine Art,
Knokke, Belgium.

The Constant Now, Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden.

Tony Matelli, Stephanie Simoens, Knokke, Belgium.

Back to the Future, CAPC Bordeaux, France.

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- 2009** *Life and Times*, Galerie Charlotte Moser, Geneva, Switzerland.
Abandon, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France.
The Idiot, Gary Tantisian Gallery, Moscow, Russia.
Tony Matelli, The Green Gallery East, Milwaukee, USA.
- 2008** *Tony Matelli*, Uppsala Konstmuseum, Uppsala, Sweden.*
Tony Matelli, Gary Tatinsian Gallery, Inc., Moscow, Russia.*
The Old Me, Leo Koenig Inc, New York, USA.
Philip Akkerman & Tony Matelli, Self Portraits, Stephanie Simoens, Knokke, Belgium.
- 2007** *New Works*, Leo Koenig Inc, New York, USA.
- 2006** Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden.
Charlotte Moser Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland.
Abandon, Centre d'Art Santa Mònica, Barcelona, Spain.
- 2005** *Fucked*, Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris, France.
Abandon, Centre d'Arte Santa Monica, Barcelona, Spain.
- 2004** *Fucked and The Oracle*, Kunstraum Dornbirn, Austria.
Abandon, Kunsthalle Wien, project space, Vienna, Austria.
- 2003** Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf, Germany.
Total Torpor, Mad Malaise, Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden.
The Happy Lion (Leo Koenig, Inc. & Galerie Michael Janssen), Los Angeles, USA.
- 2002** Emmanuel Perrotin Gallery, Paris, France.
Gian Enzo Sperone, Rome, Italy.
Gian Enzo Jr., Rome, Italy.
Bailey Fine Art, Toronto, Canada.
- 2001** Leo Koenig Inc., New York, USA.
- 2000** Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf, Germany.
Ten in One Gallery, New York, USA.
Torch, Amsterdam, Holland.
Gone, Galerie du Triangle, Bordeaux, France.
- 1999** *Abandon*, University of Buffalo Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, USA.*
Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm, Sweden.
Basilico Fine Arts, New York, USA.
- 1997** Basilico Fine Arts, New York, USA.
Ten in One Gallery, Chicago, USA.

Group Exhibitions (selected)

- 2023** *L'autre musée. Les trésors d'une grande collection d'art contemporain*, Frac Bretagne, Rennes, France.
Frieze Sculpture, Regent's Park, London, UK.
Pleasure Principle, François Ghebaly Gallery, NY
Hyper Sensible, Musée d'arts de Nantes, France.
The Flower Show, LA Louver, Los Angeles.
Reshaped Reality: 50 Years of Hyperrealistic Sculpture, Palazzo Bonaparte, Rome, Italy.
Hyper Sensible, Musée d'Arts de Nantes, Nantes, France.
- 2022** *Hyperréalisme. Ceci n'est pas un corps*, Musée de Maillol,

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- Paris, France.
Weeds & Spores, Alexandre Gallery, New York, USA.
Among Friends: Three Views of a Collection, Flag Art Foundation, New York, USA.
Janus, Morgan Presents, New York, USA.
Taxonomies of Imagination, Make Room, Los Angeles, USA.
- 2020**
8th Moscow International Biennale of Contemporary Art, Moscow, Russia.
Reshaped Reality. 50 years of Hyperrealistic, La Boverie, Liège, Belgium.
Still Human, Colección SOLO, Madrin, Spain.
- 2019**
Chapter 3HREE - Maarten Spruyt, Het HEM, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
Sculpture Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA.
ARTZUID 2019, Amsterdam Sculpture Biennale, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
Thrill of Deception: From Ancient Illusionistic Art Virtual Reality, Kunsthafele der Hypo-Kulturstiftung Munich, Munich, Germany.
People: Figurative Sculpture, Jeffrey Deitch Projects, Los Angeles, USA.
- 2018**
Hyperrealisme Sculptuur, Kunsthalle Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands.
Hyper-Realism, Kunsthalle Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany.
Relics, Ceysson & Bénétière, Paris, France.
Landscapes After Ruskin: Redefining The Sublime, curated by Joel Sternfeld, Grey Art Gallery, New York, USA.
People: Figurative Sculpture, Jeffrey Deitch Projects, New York, USA.
Objects Like Us, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, USA.
This Is A Pipe: Realism And The Found Object In Contemporary Art, Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago, USA.
- 2017**
August Sun, Lamar Dodd School of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, USA.
No Place Like Home, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel.
Reshaped Reality. 50 Years of Hyperrealistic Sculpture, ARKEN Museum of Modern Art, Ishøj, Denmark, National Gallery of Australia, Parkes, Australia.
Just The Facts, Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, Milwaukee, USA.
- 2016**
No Man is an Island - The Satanic Verses, ARoS, Aarhus, Denmark (until 2018)
Wanderlust, The High Line, New York, USA.
God's Waiting Room, Bill Grady Gallery, Miami, USA.
Summer School, Flag Art Foundation, New York, USA.
Realisms, The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, Russia.
So I turned myself to face me, Marlborough Contemporary, London, United Kingdom.
Fresh Cuts, Eric Firestone Gallery, East Hampton, New York,

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- USA.
Home Improvements, Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco, USA.
Forever, Bobox, Kortrijk, Belgium.
Mystifiers, NCCA, Moscow, Russia.
Reshaping Reality: 50 Years of Hyperrealistic Sculpture, Museo de Bellas Artes, Bilbao, Spain.
- 2015**
Eagles II, Galeria Marlborough Madrid, Madrid, Spain.
Muted Reality, Gary Tatinstsian Gallery, Moscow, Russia.
Bottoms Up: A Sculpture Survey, The Art Museum at the University of Kentucky, Lexington, USA.
Greater New York, MoMA PS1, New York, USA.
Brunch Over Troubled Water, Plutschow Gallery, Zürich, Switzerland.
Seven Deadly Sins: LUST, Hudson Valley Center of Contemporary Art, Peekskill, USA.
Unrealism, Presented by Larry Gagorian and Jeffrey Deitch, The Moore Building, Miami, USA.
- 2014**
Walk-ins Welcome, Marlborough Chelsea, New York, USA.
Baroque, Kulturhuset, Stockholm, Sweden.
Tony Matelli, Olaf Bruening, John Miller, Gary Tatintsian Gallery Inc., Moscow, Russia.
- 2013**
Pizza Time!, Marlborough Chelsea Gallery, New York, USA.
De leur Temps 4, Association pour la Diffusion International de l'Art Francais, Paris, France.
Desire, El Segundo Museum of Art, El Segundo, USA.
Lost (in LA), Flax, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery at Barnsdall Art Park, Los Angeles, USA.
Cultural Freedom in Europe, Sint-Lukasgalerie, Brussels, Belgium.
- 2012**
He Is Transparent, Renwick Gallery, New York, USA.
Simulacrum, Canzani Center Gallery, Columbus College of Art & Design, Columbus, USA.
You, your sun and shadow, Anderson Gallery, VCU, Richmond, USA.
- 2011**
Échoes, le Musée Nissim de Camondo, Paris, France.
Sélestat Biennial, Curated by Hans Dünser, Olivier Grasser, Sophie Kaplan, Pierre-Olivier Rollin, Otto Teichert.
Small, Medium, Large, Donjon DeVez, France.
Personal Structures, 54th International Venice Biennale, Palazzo Bembo, Venice, Italy.
Fragmentations, Le Frac des Pays de la Loire, France
- 2010**
Hunters and Gatherers, Gian Enzo Sperone, Sent, Switzerland.
The Wasteland, The White Box, New York, USA.
À vos papiers, Galerie Charlotte Moser, Geneva, Switzerland.
Both Sides of the Pulaski, curated by Andréa Salerno, Fine Art in Space, Long Island City, New York, USA.
Hyping the Real, Stephane Simoens Contemporary Fine Art, Knokke, Belgium.
Love in Vein, Gering & Lopez, New York, USA.
No Show, Spencer Bownstone, New York, USA.
Transcending..., LARMgalleri, Copenhagen, Denmark.

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- Just Love Me*, Mudam Luxembourg, Luxembourg.
Hyping The Real, Stephane Simoens, Knokke, Belgium.
Blind Sculpture, curated by Gelitin, Greene Naftali, New York, USA.
New acquisitions of the Art Foundation Mallorca Collection, Seventy major works by fifty major artists, CCA Kunsthalle Andratx, Mallorca, Spain.
Realismus: Das Abenteuer der Wirklichkeit, Hupo Stiftung, Munich, Germany.*
Don't Piss on Me and Tell Me It's raining, APEX Art, New York, USA.
By-Self, CAPC, Bordeaux, France.
Time - Life, Taxter & Spengemann, New York, USA.
- 2009** *Realismus: Das Abenteuer der Wirklichkeit*, Kunsthalle Emden, Germany.*
N'importe Quoi, Musee d'Art Contemporain de Lyon, France.*
N'importe Quoi, Musee d'Art Contemporain de Lyon, France.*
The Figure and Dr. Freud, Haunch of Vension, New York, USA.
Chasin Napolian, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France.
The Figure and Dr. Freud, Haunch of of Vensison, New York, USA.
TIME-LIFE, Taxter & Spengemann, New York, USA.
Nature en Kit, Museum MUDAC, Lausanne, Switzerland.*
Group Show, Galerie Loevenbruck, Paris, France.
Anything, MAC, Lyon, France.
Infinitesimal Eternity, Images Made in the Face of Spectacle, Yale School of Art, New Haven, USA.
The Effect of Modern Art on Green Cirlcles, curated by Anslem Franke, Vanmoerkerke Collection, Belgium.
Guided by Voices, Forest City Gallery, London, Ontario, Canada.
Ferne Nähe, Kunstmuseum, Bonn, Germany.*
Time - Life, Taxter & Spengemann, New York, USA.
Persona. Image. Time. Human Representation in Art: from Modernism to Present-Day, The Cultural foundation Ekaterina, Moscow, Russia. *
- 2008** *D'une révolution à l'autre*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France.
Faxination, Curated by Bill Saylor, Galleri LOYAL, Stockholm, Sweden.
Another Mythology, State National Centre of Contemporary Art, Moscow, Russia.
New Media, Stephane Simoens, Knokke, Belgium.
Fuck You Human, Maribel Lopez Gallery, Berlin, Germany.
Contemporary Fine Arts, Knokke-Zoute, Belgium.
Evolution, Max Lang, New York, NY, USA.
Esculturismo, la Suma de Todas, Madrid, Spain.*
Attention to Detail, curated by Chuck Close, The FLAG Art Foundation, New York, NY, USA.*
Betes et Hommes, Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris, France.*
Undone, Tom Holmes, Tony Matelli, Eileen Quilan and Heather

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- 2007** Rowe, Whitney Museum at Altria, New York, NY, USA.
Bad Planet, Gary Tatintsian Gallery, Moscow, Russia.
Stranger than Paradise, curated by Max Henry, Galerie Charlotte Moser, Geneva, Switzerland.
I AM AS YOU WILL BE, *Skeletons in Art*, Cheim & Read, NY, New York, USA.*
Pull My Finger, curated by Joe Zane, Allston Skirt Gallery, Boston, MA, USA.*
Die Macht des Dinglichen - SCULPTUR HEUTE! (The Power of the Physical - SCULPTURE TODAY!), Georg-Kolbe-Museum, Berlin, Germany.*
MAD LOVE - Young Art from Danish Private Collections, ARKEN Museum for Moderne Kunst, Ishøj, Denmark.
Still Life, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, New Zealand.
Baroque Biology: Tony Matelli/Alexis Rockman, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, USA.*
NEW, Stephane Simoens Contemporary Fine Art, Knokke, Belgium.
- 2006** *The Furnace*, curated by Goschka Macuga, AFoundation, Liverpool, United Kingdom.
Helter, Helter, curated by Max Henry, Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris, France.
Hysteria Siberiana, Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art, Lisbon, Portugal.
Into Me/Out of Me, KW Institute of Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany.
5'000'000'000 d'années/5 Billion Years, Palais De Tokyo, Paris, France.
Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris, France.
- 2005** *Baroque and Neo-Baroque. The Hell of the Beautiful*, *The Domus Artium 2*, Centre of Contemporary Art of Salamanca, Spain.
The Most Splendid Apocolypse, P.P.O.W. Gallery, NYC, USA.
It'll Cost You..., curated by Beth Rudin DeWoody, Kathleen Cullen Fine Arts, LLC, NYC, USA.
Figure It Out, Hudson Valley Center For Contemporary Art, Peekskill, NY, USA.
Fairy Tales Forever, Homage to H.C. Andersen, AroS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark.
Self Preservation Society, Leo Koenig Inc., New York, USA.
Leaving Cockaigne, Leo Koenig Inc., New York, USA.
Gary Tatintsian Gallery, Moscow, Russia.
The Altoids Curiously Strong Collection, Consolidated Works, Contemporary Arts Center, Seattle, WA; Blue Star Art Complex, San Antonio, TX, USA.
- 2004** *Editions Fawbush*, Sandra Gering Gallery, New York, USA.
Contemporary Western Art Gary, Tatintsian Gallery Inc. Moscow, Russia.
Me, Myself and I, Schmidt Center at Florida University, Boca Raton Florida, USA.

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- Mystery Achievement*, Taxter&Spengemann, New York, USA.
I am the Walrus, Cheim & Reid, curated by Jan Avigkos, New York, USA.
The Uncanny, Tate Liverpool, United Kingdom, Curated by Mike Kelley.
Beautiful Grotesque, Riva Gallery, NYC, USA.
Making Visible, Gallery Faurschou, Copenhagen, Denmark.
Metamorphosis, John Michael Kohler Art Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin, USA.
Ten Commandments, Hygiene Museum, Dresden, Germany.
Altered States, Leo Koenig Inc., New York, USA.
Five Billion Years, Swiss Institute-Contemporary Art, New York, USA.
- 2003** *Instructions*, Kunsthalle Wien, curated by Gerald Matt Vienna, Austria.
One Hundred Artists, One Hundred T-shirts, Daniel Silverstein Gallery, New York, USA.
Narcissus, CRAC Alsace, curated by Hilde Teerlinck Altkirch, France.
The Fourth Sex, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, curated by Francesco Bonami, Chicago, USA.
Liquid Sky, FRAC, curated by Marc Olivier Wahler, Dijon, France.*
- 2002** *There's always tomorrow*, with Nicole Eisenman, Jeff Elrod, Torben Giehler, Galleria Marabini, Bologna, Italy.*
Artemis, Greenberg van Doren Gallery, New York, USA.
Leo Koenig Las Vegas, Neonopolis, Las Vegas, USA.
The Dubrow Biennial, Kagan Martos Gallery, New York, USA.
- 2001** *Vrai que Nature*, CAPC, Bordeaux, France.
The Americans, Barbican Gallery, London, United Kingdom.*
Come on, feel the noise, Asbaek, Copenhagen, Denmark.
SQUAT, Smart Project Space, Amsterdam, Holland.
- 2000** *The Greenhouse Effect*, The Serpentine Gallery, London, United Kingdom.*
Climbin' The Walls Thinking It Might Be A Way Out, Robert Birch Gallery, Toronto, Canada.
Baberg, Matelli, Schabel, Paul Morris Gallery, New York, USA.
Tomorrow, RareArt Properties, New York, USA.
Nothing, Andrew Kreps, New York, USA.
Greater New York - New Art in New York Now, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York, USA.
Small World, MOCA, San Diego, La Jolla, USA.*
Over the Edges: The Corners of Gent, curated by Jan Hoet, S.M.A.K., Gent, Belgium.
- 1999** *Holding Court*, Entwistle, London, United Kingdom.
In the Public Realm, Public Art Fund, New York, USA.
True West, curated by Jason Murison, PPOW, New York, USA.
Contemporary Public Sculpture, organized by the Public Art Fund, Brooklyn, NY, USA.

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- 1998** *Beyond the Monument*, organized by the Public Art Fund, Metrotech Center, Brooklyn, NY, USA.
Yesterday Begins Tomorrow, Bard College for Curatorial Studies, curated by Francesco Bonami, New York, USA.
Pop Surrealism, Aldrich Museum, Connecticut, USA.*
Spatiotemporal - Works from the Collection 1988-1998, Magasin 3 Stockholm Konsthall, Sweden.
Pollution, Claudia Gian Ferrari Arte Contemporanea, Milan, Italy.*
- 1997** *To be Real*, Center for the Arts at Yerba Buena Gardens, San Francisco, USA.
Bring your own Walkman, W139, Amsterdam, Holland.
- 1996** *Clarity*, Northern Illinois University, Chicago, USA.
- 1995** *Thesis Exhibition*, Cranbrook Academy of Art, C.A.A. Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, USA.

*Catalogue

Public Collections

ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark
ARKEN Museum of Modern Art, Ishøj, Denmark
Akzo Nobel Art Foundation
Bergen Kunstmuseum, Bergen, Norway
Bonnier Collection, Stockholm, Sweden
CCA Andratx, Majorca, Spain
Cranbrook Art Museum, Cranbrook, MI
CURIOUSLY STRONG Altoids Collection, (New Museum) New York, NY
The Cultural Foundation Ekaterina, Moscow, Russia
The Davis Museum, Wellesley, MA
FLAG Art Foundation, New York, NY
Fundacion La Caixa Madrid, Spain
FRAC Bordeaux, France
Magasin 3 Stockholm Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden
MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, MA
Mudam Luxembourg, Luxembourg
Musée d'arte Contemporain Montreal, Canada
Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany
Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand
Museum Voorlinden, Wassenaar, Netherlands
Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, OK
State National Centre of Contemporary Art, Moscow, Russia
Skive New Art Museum SNYK, Copenhagen, Denmark
Sundsvalls Kommun, Sundsvall, Sweden
Uppsala Konstmuseum, Uppsala, Sweden