

Diego Marcon
Monelle

1 Davies Street W1
20 January - 18 March 2023

Opening in January 2023, Sadie Coles HQ will present a solo exhibition by Italian-born artist Diego Marcon spotlighting his acclaimed 2017 film *Monelle*—to mark the artist's first solo exhibition at the gallery and in the UK.

Diego Marcon has earned wide recognition for a conceptually rigorous practice that focuses on the moving image; encompassing film, video installation and sculpture. His works reflect a nuanced investigation of cinematic archetypes, combining both theoretical and structural approaches, and their rich narrative potential to express profound psychological and emotional states.



Rendered in 35mm film and CGI animation, *Monelle* explores the manifestation of power and oppression, and the capacity of a place to bear the imprint of past violences. The film centres on a group of young girls that lie sleeping amongst the monolithic spaces of the Casa del Fascio in Como, Italy—a building designed by renowned Italian Modernist architect Giuseppe Terragni, as the headquarters for the regional Fascist Party under Mussolini. Made visible only momentarily in bursts of flashlight, the girls and their surroundings are witnessed for just long enough for the viewers' gaze to register, before abruptly dissipating into prolonged sequences of darkness.

As the film progresses the camera steadily navigates through the Casa del Fascio, revealing its architectural spaces and figures in sudden, short exposures; ominously superseded by a negative retinal impression of the absence that follows. These vignettes variously reveal young girls, partially obscured or hunched in gestures of childlike tenderness and vulnerability; figures dragged from view; falling; or vacant. Sharing the darkened spaces with the children are a second cast of menacing CGI generated figures—their ominous presence echoing the psychological and physical darkness. Set in dialogue with the insistent repetition of the building's austere structure, the figures' vulnerabilities and liminal presence conjure a disquieting atmosphere of simultaneous terror and ambiguity.

Reflecting Marcon's lateral approach to filmmaking, *Monelle* employs both the cold, systematic style of Structural film—following a process-driven sequential mode of filming—interwoven with the affecting features of Horror. Through the layering of these elements, the film's structure self-reflexively amplifies the dissonant emotive registers of dispassionate formalism and of human vulnerability, fear and aggression. Of this Marcon has stated: '[the] emotional impact is, I believe, unleashed by the cold and rigorous structure of the film.'

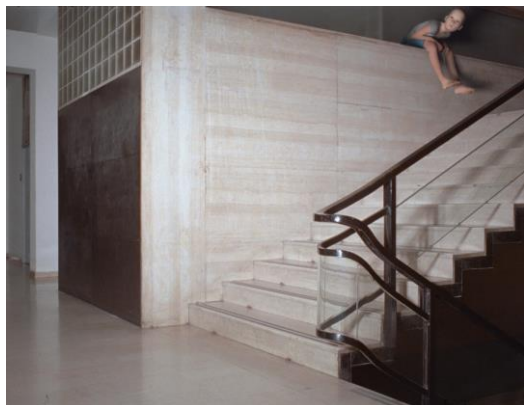
As elsewhere in his oeuvre, the film is conceived in a looping structure, devoid of a beginning or conclusion. In evading linear time, the scenario becomes interminable, the tension building without resolve; such that the film eschews narrative and confines the space to one of acute psychological tension and ambiguity. At Davies Street, the film is installed in an entirely darkened room, its soundscape of pervasive silence merging with the gallery setting, infiltrating the space and enveloping the viewer in the spaces of the Casa del Fascio. It is in these vagaries that Marcon examines the ontology of the moving image and its capacity to test ones relationship with representation and reality; as well as calling in to question the nature of bearing witness to histories of power and repression that persist in the everyday.

Diego Marcon (b. 1985, Busto Arsizio, Italy) graduated from IUAV University of Arts of Venice (2012). Marcon has exhibited internationally with solo presentations including *The Parents' Room*, Museo Madre, Naples (2021); *Ludwig*, Institute of Contemporary Art Singapore/LASALLE, Singapore (2019); *La miserabile*, La Triennale di Milano, Milan (2018). He has exhibited in numerous group exhibition including as part of *The Milk of Dreams* curated by Cecilia Alemani, 59th Biennale Arte, Venice (2022); Museo MACTE, Termoli (2021); Museo MACRO, Rome (2021); Fondazione Prada, Milan (2019); Palazzo Medici Ricciardi, Florence (2017); Centre international d'art et du paysage/Treignac project, Île de Vassivière/Treignac (2015); Whitechapel Gallery, London (2013). Marcon currently lives and works in Milan.

www.sadiecoles.com

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Monelle

2017

Digital video transferred from 35mm film, CGI animation, colour, sound

dur: 13 min 53 sec, looped

Edition of 5 plus 2 artist's proofs (#4/5)

HQ25-DM18526V

A film by Diego Marcon

Produced by In Between Art Film; co-produced by Ermes-Ermes

With the support of Guardia di Finanza, Comando Provinciale Como; Archivio Terragni, Como; Archivio Nazionale Cinema d'Impresa, Ivrea

In collaboration with Beyond Entropy, London; Musil – Museo dell'Industria e del Lavoro, Brescia

Produced by: Silvia Cipriani

Cinematography: Pierluigi Laffi

Visual Effects: Diego Zuelli

Sound: Federico Chiari

Performers: Giulia Ambrosoli, Emma Bertolini, Carlotta Cardinale,

Alberta Casali, Alessia Fontana, Vidushi Samarasinghe

Performers' Coordinator: Laura Cavalleri

Monelle has been recognised with major awards including the Jury Award – Deframed Competition, Hamburg International Short Film Festival 2018; Mirage – Outstanding Art Exploration Award, Beijing International Short Film Festival 2018; and both the Explora Award, Best Experimental Film and Young Jury Award, Curtocírculo. 15° Festival Internacional de Cine 2018. In addition, the work has been screened at numerous festivals including the International Film Festival Rotterdam 2018; BFI London Film Festival 2018; Courtisane Festival 2018 – Notes on Cinema, Gent; Cinéma du reel 2018 – International Shorts Competition, Paris; doclisboa'18 – 16° festival internacional de cinema 2018 – New Visions, Lisbon; Short Wave Film Festival 2019 and LSFF, ICA London 2020, among others.

For further information please contact the gallery at +44 (0)20 7493 8611 or press@sadiecoles.com

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