

# DENNIS TYFUS

## Tattooed Tears Of Joy

25 January 2024 - 16 March 2024



Tim Van Laere Gallery presents its second solo exhibition by Dennis Tyfus, titled *Tattooed Tears Of Joy*. In this exhibition, Tyfus presents a new series of drawings, an interactive installation of bells, a video, a sculpture elaborating on the *Strafstudie* series and an outdoor sculpture located in the gallery's patio.

The artistic practice of Dennis Tyfus features a wide range of media and visual expressions, including drawings, sculptures, installations, videos, magazines, books, vinyl issues, not to mention his own radio show, music, concerts and performances. Tyfus' works of art often originate in his subconscious, with the choice of medium and specific location where the work is displayed playing an important role. Accordingly, his approach can be compared to that of artists such as Dieter Roth, Jim Shaw and Wim T. Schippers, each of which explores diverse forms and media in their all-embracing desire to challenge our expectations. In his work, the artist incorporates elements from both popular culture and the avant-garde, creating a universe in which personal, anecdotal, everyday and unexplainable elements are combined in a completely idiosyncratic way, without being bound by strict definitions and fixed beginnings and ends.

In *Tattooed Tears Of Joy*, Dennis Tyfus reveals his love of experimental music and sound art by placing three carillon bells amid a series of large drawings. This bell installation *A Rotating Threesome* originates in the score *This is one chord. This is another. This is a third. Now form a band*, a drawing of three fundamental punk guitar chords taken from *Sideburn #1*, an unequivocally DIY fanzine that was published in 1977. The drawings has become something of a maxim to live by in the punk scene and is often used as a call to action. In effect, the visitor is invited to form a band for the occasion. The carillon bells bear recognisable drawings and serve as a counterpart to Tyfus' large colour pencil drawings of dream scenarios, in which the protagonist drifts through exuberant, psychedelic landscapes, becoming involved in absurd, dreamy or nightmarish situations. He draws his inspiration from a hypnagogic state of sleep, in which the world escapes reason and the mind embraces the surreal. During this phase of sleep, the inner self generates intense visual and auditive hallucinations, which are quickly forgotten upon awakening. Tyfus is inspired by these intangible moments, in which strange and intriguing images come to the fore with no obvious origin.

Visible from the window of the gallery offices is a hyper-realistic sculpture. This work elaborates on the *Strafstudie* series, in which human figures are exposed to banal yet unbearable humiliation they appear to be unable to escape. Tyfus is deeply fascinated by the absurdity of human effort and the ingenuity we find when punishing others. The hunched-forward pose of the figure, which bears a striking resemblance to the gallery director, recalls an absurd film, while the actual person is sitting in her usual workplace. In this way, the hyper-realistic sculpture, with its melancholy appearance, challenges our usual expectations regarding the real person and her role as gallery director. This gives spectators the freedom to interpret the work in their own way and to formulate their own conclusions.

Dennis Tyfus (born 1979 in Antwerp, Belgium) lives and works in Antwerp. His work has been exhibited internationally, including at the Middelheim Museum in Antwerp; M HKA in Antwerp; S.M.A.K. in Ghent; Bozar in Brussels; the CAPC Museum of Contemporary Art of Bordeaux, France; Sao Paulo Art Gallery, Brazil; Damtschach Castle, Austria; Kunstschlager in Reykjavik, Iceland; and Kunstverein Mannheim and Ludwigshafen in Ludwigshafen am Rhein, Germany. His work also features in public collections, such as those of M HKA and the Middelheim Museum, both in Antwerp.