

Cristian Andersen

Milk and Honey on 3rd Road

Opening Gallery Weekend, Saturday, 14 June 2014 6 - 8 pm
Exhibition 14 June - 31 July 2014

What is art all about? It's about soul, about spirit and emotions, beauty, fantasy and illusion, harmony and energy. In essence, it's about us humans and our place in this world. And about the fact that life is short, precarious even, a constant flow filled with crises and defined by fate. That's what we have to face up to.

Art in its traditional sense, devoted to ideals of beauty, is so much larger than life itself, giving all the uncertainty that surrounds us a sense of grandeur and permanence. Fragments on the other hand levitate; they entail the possibility of being a part of something that was once whole, a starting point perhaps of an incomplete creation. With all that is unfinished, temporary and commonplace, including even the trash we are confronted with day to day, it is this fragment that creates a dynamic of perception. Hence it is not surprising that artists have experimented with elements of trash or worked with poor materials, combining them into assemblages, fashioning works of Pop and sublimating these into a Merzian heaven.

Cristian Andersen (*1974, Denmark) continues this tradition, yet not exclusively. His sculptures come into being through an accumulation of steps, the first of which is a putting together of various "objets trouvés." Figuratively narrative elements, such as a tennis ball, dice perhaps, or a popcorn even, are fused with constructively abstract - post-minimal - industrial materials, such as rigid Sagex foam or expanded materials that have been taken apart into approximate pieces and at times even bear the marks of previous use. Spatially pegging the room and determining its plasticity, Andersen fits together these parts and elements: front, back, up, down. In a next step he creates silicon negatives of these sculptures. Complex scaffolds of sorts encase these moulds that are then filled with a partially pigmented, highly dense and self-curing industrial ceramic. The "copies" that emerge from this process become the new originals, which play an intriguing game of mimicry with the porcelain-like ceramics, deceptively acting the part of the original foam. Only when touching them do we realise the immense weight and compactness of these casts; tapping these brings forth an almost metallic sound. As a result, actual fragments have been transformed into blocks of complex surfaces. The pastiche of the original sculpture enters a new material existence, the casting of which encapsulates decay, destruction and loss, while the combined relics settle within the storage medium of ceramics.

The result, we might say, is a new whole. The added pigments abstract the artwork by blurring the lines between the various original elements. What we see is neither a collage nor a reconstruction. The artistic process converts the forgotten and lost, the banal and destroyed into a new order of material unity and identity that appears to have a life of its own. This too may be nothing but an illusion, but technically as well as conceptually illusions are highly complex and fragile.

Translated into english from a text by Juri Steiner