

Lupo Borgonovo

willow pillow

Opening
Saturday 25 July 2015
6 pm

On view
25 July – 29 August

Hours:
Tuesday-Saturday
3 – 7 pm

Galleria Monica De Cardenas is pleased to present *willow pillow*, the first solo show by Lupo Borgonovo at the gallery, in the Zuoz venue. The exhibition features sculptures made in 2014 and 2015, as well as two series of drawings from 2015.

In recent years Borgonovo has developed a body of work that combines traditional sculptural language with an exotic imaginary and an interest in alchemical processes of transformation of matter. Visiting his exhibition means venturing into a landscape of arcane forms, beings suspended between the organic world and the synthetic sphere, artifacts and excrescences, everyday objects and science fiction creations. Every work is a facet of a narrative that magically joins ancestral myths and contemporary stories in a single cosmogony.

The background of *willow pillow* is the vision of a mythological ship tossed between countless shores as in a Homeric odyssey, where in each region visited, each civilization encountered, the vessel takes on specimens, materials, images, techniques. Therefore the rooms of the gallery can be seen as the holdings of the ship, in which these objects are painstakingly organized by 'families' and 'types'.

The first room contains four large sculptures titled *Leglog*. Made by pouring polyurethane foam into sacks of artificial leather, these works are like the "legs" of legendary reptiles. They evoke a "prehistory" that not only exists as an encoded imaginary for ready reinterpretation, but also as a fossil scenario that powerfully surfaces through the cracks of our present, suggesting anomalies and frictions in the evolutionary process. Sensual yet inanimate, these "'legs" can be summed up as the limbs of cyborgs to which the artist, a "modern Prometheus," will one day give life.

In the next rooms there are sculptures that suggest other demonstrations of the alchemical and freely creative spirit of Borgonovo. *Ornithology*, *Yelloween* and *S* are all groups in which the process approach takes on ceremonial tones, generating scenarios in which the works are comparable to liturgical instruments or ritual objects. The sculptures in the *Ornithology* series, for instance, are supports for eggs or rare varieties of dried fruit, in which the arrangement of the elements seems to be based on an obscure numerological construct, almost a magical formula. *Yelloween* groups works that remind us of bowls or vases: they are rubber molds of exotic fruit in which the artist has allowed the fruit to rot, almost as if to impregnate the rubber with sensorial qualities. These works are "vehicles" of a gesture, a hypothetical content. Finally, the cycle *S*: oblong works obtained by rolling latex "leaves" to imitate a tangle of reptiles, apparently gathered in the same place to take part in some ecstatic rite.

Along the perimeter of the show run two series of ink drawings. Both cycles depict artifacts of different natures and origins; but while in the first they are made with painstaking technique, in the second they are comparable to sketches. As a whole, the drawings can be interpreted as the log of that mythological ship that is the exhibition, a constellation in which the many symbolic systems the ship has encountered are made to intersect. Produced like twins, one "pedantic," the other "slipshod," they reveal an imaginative voyage balanced on two discordant rhythms, without an itinerary and perhaps without a destination.

Lupo Borgonovo was born in Milan in 1985, where he presently lives and works. Selected solo shows: *Mandolino*, Cripta 747, Turin (2014), *The Big Simon*, ABC, Berlin (2013), *Orbita*, Fluxia, Milan (2012). Selected group shows: in 2015 *L'Hospices des Milles-Cuisses*, CAN, Neuchâtel; *Together Forever*, 138 Eldrige St., New York. In 2014 *Habitat*, Minerva, Sydney; *Italian Summer*, Galleria Monica De Cardenas, Zuoz; *Cocu ou Marron*, CAN, Neuchâtel. In 2013 *Art of Living (i.e. Goodbye Blue Monday)*; Galerie Chez Valentin, Paris; *AB*, Nomas Foundation, Rome; *The Cthulhu Club*, Gasconade, Milan.

Text by Michele D'Aurizio