



Giulio Delvè
Condominium
29/06 – 05/08 2017

*In a sense life in the high-rise had begun to resemble the world outside –
there were the same ruthlessness and aggression concealed within a set
of polite conventions.*
– J.G. Ballard

Mendes Wood DM is pleased to present *Condominium*, Giulio Delvè's first solo exhibition in Brussels. The presentation brings together the artist's most recent works, comprised of found objects and commonly used materials such as metal, glass, wax and plaster. Delvè allows for an anthropomorphic dialogue between the floor sculptures and wall-mounted works, as murmurs and glances are softly exchanged amongst rough structures.

The exhibition is inspired by Delvè's recent experience of living in a collectively occupied property in Naples. It was during a period when the mayor encouraged the occupation of unused housing estates throughout the city. Both participant and observer at once, Delvè was able to critically analyze the shared micro-community from within. Residing there was a powerful experience for the artist, as tensions developed within the community and fights with the police increasingly broke out. Delvè understood that the occupation repeated the very social mechanisms that the squatters were positioning themselves against.

In *Condominium*, Delvè uses an air compressor and beer bottles to create whisper-sounds throughout the installation. Nearby, a sculpture of wire mesh, mortar and glass eyes perpetuates an atmosphere of surveillance as it glances across the exhibition. The series of wall installations made from broken glass echo this dystopian atmosphere as paintings that emulate the tiles of traditional Italian houses are imbued with this double entendre. Delvè also captures an essence of hope and beauty from the discarded and forgotten elements of Naples. Using an old palm leaf found on the streets to create bees wax impressions of sunrises and sunsets, he poetically re-appropriates that which would have otherwise been swept away as trash the next day. Together, the works suggest a shift from exhibition to demonstration, questioning who and what is being watched and challenging the line between public and private sphere.

Inspired by J.G. Ballard's novel *High-Rise*, which describes the lives of inhabitants of a high-rise apartment building, Delvè propels an awareness of the shared human condition that evolves out of the act of living together. Delvè responds to the complacency of the

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characters in *High-Rise*, who inevitably accept the social status quo as chaos unfolds inside the building, without any support from external authorities. For Delvè, Ballard's description of purposeless residents roaming trashed hallways in despair is the foreboding account of that will happen if we continue to go ignore the difficulties of those in distressed housing.

Condominium questions the social constructs that are formed within an environment – be it a continent, country or condominium – and how they too often revolve around authoritarianism, the search for power and, above all, contradiction. Throughout the exhibition Delvè proposes an atmosphere of conspiracy, transforming his own observations and experience into a silent revolution.

Giulio Delvè (Naples, 1984) lives and works in Naples, Italy. His recent exhibitions include: *Neither.*, Mendes Wood DM, Brussels (2017); *Muixeranga*, project for BASE OPEN, Base progetti per l'arte, Florence (2017); *SUBLIMINA*, Museo delle Mura Aureliane, Rome (2016); *Conspire means to breathe together*, Supportico Lopez, Berlin (2016); *Wholetrain*, Fondazione per l'Arte, Rome (2015); *Andata e ricordo. Souvenir du voyage*, MART, Rovereto (2013).

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