

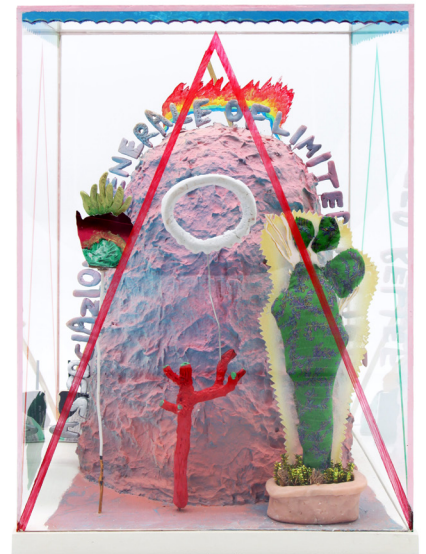
I CAN DO IT ALONE WHEN YOU'RE NOT HERE



ZENA GURBO &
SIMONE MANTELLASSI

AUG. 31 - SEPT. 22

OPENING RECEPTION:
SATURDAY, AUG. 31ST, 4-7PM



KIPNZ is pleased to announce "I Can Do it Alone When You're Not Here," a two-person exhibition with artwork by Zena Gurbo and Simone Mantellassi, an artist couple based in Gilbertsville, New York.

Both come from an artistic background—Gurbo from a highly creative family in Brooklyn, and Mantellassi from Florence, the birthplace of the Italian Renaissance. Despite their marriage and life together, this is an exhibition of two artists and two practices. However, together since 2002, this is also an exhibition about the intensity and inspiration of a shared creative life.

The bright acrylic paints of Gurbo's palette—most notably, a Day-Glo pink—find themselves on surfaces such as recycled paper bags, found canvases, and wood cut-outs. The embodied nature of both her creative childhood environment, as well as having taught art and creative expression to people with developmental disabilities for over two decades, is reflected in her work. Indeed her primary object is the human figure, projected as a sort of container through which she interrogates her own psyche, as well as the collective unconscious with force and humor. Gurbo is a process-oriented artist; each work develops according to its own, incrementally-revealed logic. This process of working is, for Gurbo, a movement toward awareness, and, ideally, healing.

Self-taught artist Simone Mantellassi's early creative life was shaped by the art of Florence, where he practiced drawing, especially his hands and feet. "From there I moved to find a more suitable way to express what was lacking in early figurative compositions." Today, drawing remains an essential part of Mantellassi's practice, where objects and language from everyday life intermingle with a humorous, dreamy palette of color; surfaces expand and contract between resolution and dissolution. Mantellassi is drawn toward the "downcast, the broken, the half-inflated, for their very human feeling of 'not there yet'," spinning toward transformation. For the artist this tension is "joyous and sad at the same time."

From certain drawings emerge Mantellassi's sculptures, compact, diorama-like compositions within a plexiglas casing. The humor and breezy irony of his work is made concretely manifest in these objects, whose crumply surfaces, crude imitations and "imperfect" finishes are precisely where the work resonates with the jolly absurdity of everyday life. "As a stage set, from the audience you see something, from backstage you see the artifice of it all; how everything is propped up for the viewer. Being able to see both sides lets their meaning deepen and multiply."

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