

Martina Simeti

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Sylvie Auvray. BROOM

Martina Simeti

Via Tortona 4 Milano

Opening 26 March 2019, 6.30 pm

27 March - 17 May 2019

Martina Simeti inaugurates the programming of her renewed gallery at number 4 Via Tortona in Milan with BROOM: the first solo show in Italy by the artist Sylvie Auvray.

After the preview last September and in the light of renovation works also intended to create a residential area for visiting artists, Martina Simeti's exhibition and project space will invite artists, designers and other creatives, both Italian and international, to explore and 'blur' the distinctions between conceptual and applied arts, between handicrafts and design.

Born in Paris, class of 1974 and highly versatile, Auvray has long dealt with the images and forms that come into her life and which condition our relationship with reality. Her series of brooms – made of ceramic, vegetable fibres, fabric and metal – reflect the sideward gaze cast by the artist over the everyday dimension in order to highlight the potency of the object. The bestioles that live inside them subtly provoke the domestic space, bringing malice and play into the nooks and crannies where things usually lie still.

There was a man that Auvray would go and drink tea with in a small town near Marfa (Texas). He would gather the skeletons of cacti and turn them into sticks for his brooms: light dry wood, covered in black spots, as if they were stigmata left by the broken needles. While they talked, the man would tie loose knots to bind the brushwood to the stick, turning these humble objects in his hands: waiting yet already in movement.

And so Sylvie Auvray's broomsticks became a series of necks, some very long and others very short, holding up these mocking faces in glazed terracotta. Heavy and all too lifelike, almost 'uncapturable', they seem to withhold the electric charge of a dance.

Forced to stand in the corner as a form of punishment like one of Degas's young dancers. As if they had abandoned the discipline only to don skirts of straw, linen thread or turkey feathers and turn themselves into a broom or a sorceress.

While Sylvie Auvray's plates are a series of paintings, her brooms are sculptures that need nothing but a corner to stand up straight, with no call for a base. They are like the waiting – or suspended – elements, like the chairs or the objects hanging from the walls of the English Shakers, a sect that preaches purity, perhaps to make more room for their dances and trances. Or perhaps they swallowed Legba, the Voodoo godhead, compared to the devil by certain anthropologists, who subtly shifts the order given to objects, leading to chaos.

Text by Sarah Holveck

Sylvie Auvray, born in 1974, completed her studies at the École des Beaux Arts de Montpellier and at the City & Guilds of London Art School. She simultaneously began to work both in the realm of fashion with Sonia Rykiel and Martine Sitbon and in the world of art, exhibiting in the early 2000s at the Galerie Jean Brolly in Paris, followed by numerous exhibitions both in private galleries and museum venues, including: South Willard, Los Angeles, 2019; CAC Brétigny, 2019; FRAC, Champagne Ardenne Reims (2018); Gagosian Gallery, Geneva (2018); Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville, Paris (2017); Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris (2016); Chantal Crousel, Paris (2013); MAMCO, Geneva (2012), and Le Consortium, Dijon (2011).