

Meredith Rosen Gallery

Meredith Rosen Gallery presents “What's with thinking about the end?” a solo exhibition by Dardan Zhegrova. The exhibition opens on December 10th and will remain on view until January 14th at 11 East 78th Street. “What's with thinking about the end” is Zhegrova’s debut solo exhibition in New York and his first presentation with Meredith Rosen Gallery.

The exhibition will present four interactive plush sculptures from the artist’s series *Your enthusiasm to tell a story*, 2015-ongoing, consisting of large voodoo dolls embedded with recorded poetry spoken by the artist. Reflecting on his adolescent experience in Prishtina, Zhegrova’s poems express queer longing and alienation amidst a culture undergoing economic and social transformation. From the first-person perspective, the poems address a nondescript ‘you’ with projections of romance, lust, and desire for acceptance. Viewers are invited to touch and sit with each sculpture and listen to the recording enclosed in each doll. The ‘I’ and ‘you’ dialogue creates an intimate situation, furthered by the artist’s intervention in the gallery space, with softened lighting and carpets.

While voodoo dolls are associated with the infliction of pain, Zhegrova’s sculptures address the underpinning of loneliness and yearning for control at the root of projected desires—pain and pleasure alike. The doll structures simultaneously evoke a childlike innocence and naivety, which allows the artist to present stories of queer relationships in a subversive format resistant to censorship. By removing details of individuals in each poetic narrative, the boundary between self and other disintegrates in the confessional dialogue. The object of projection is blurred as desire is mitigated through the life-sized plush dolls. The manipulative nature of voodoo dolls reveals itself to be a mirror of idealization and projection in romantic love, the contours of which are often formed in early childhood experiences.

Zhegrova’s work speaks to our collective wrestling with alienation, amidst an increasingly divided world, both politically and personally through the rise of digital culture. “What’s with thinking about the end” presents a body of work in the gap between pain and desire, articulating art’s capacity to cope with an immeasurable sense of loss and yearning.

Dardan Zhegrova (b. 1991) lives and works in Prishtina. Recent exhibitions include Manifesta 14, Prishtina; “All That We Have in Common,” Museum of Contemporary Art Skopje; “The Event of a Thread,” MOMus - Experimental Center for the Arts, Thessaloniki; “Interference,” curated by Hana Halilaj, CCS Bard, Hessel Museum, New York. Zhegrova has been a resident of the Balkan Project Residency, Swiss Institute, New York; Reconnection 2.0, Belgrade; and the International Studio & Curatorial Program, New York.