

FONDAZIONE ZIMEI

Francesco João: Seven Segment Display

curated by Massimiliano Scuderi and Marco Nicodemo

08.07.2023 - 02.09.2023

Palazzo Cavallerini Lazzaroni, Via dei Barbieri 7, Rome, Italy

Fondazione Zimei is pleased to announce *Seven Segment Display*, a solo exhibition by Francesco João curated by Massimiliano Scuderi and Marco Nicodemo, host inside the prestigious spaces of Palazzo Cavallerini Lazzaroni, located in via dei Barbieri 7 in Rome.

Francesco João (b. 1987), who lives and works between São Paulo, Brazil and Milan, Italy, is one of the most interesting artistic personalities of recent years. His research is defined around the awareness of the conceptual aspects of the pictorial practice, such as the procedural ones and the structures that articulate painting, declining it from time to time, in its various forms.

By deconstructing the pictorial gesture, the artist questions its principles and means, analyzing not only its basic elements, such as the canvas, but also its temporal dimension, in a return to the zero degree of painting. The exhibition consists of a series of works investigating the language of the seven segment display - the electronic display device for displaying decimal numerals - which in the 1970s constituted the common image of a future time, thanks to the first digital LED devices that adopted its graphic combinations. Alongside these twelve gouache and acrylic on raw canvas, a series that João started investigating in 2016 - he presents a new series of sculptures and ready-mades, in various materials. With this large installation, the artist declines the themes of transcendence, economy, time and function in a sculptural form.

The artist states:

The aesthetic of the seven segment display evokes an idea of future seen from the past: for me it is a subject that represents a pretext for making "painting", because I see painting as a medium that, throughout the course of history, is constantly projected forward (avant-garde?) since caves times where, however, "avant-garde" was replaced by a "function," in that case, propitiatory to hunting and therefore economic. I have always been interested in the relationship between transcendence and economics.

A series of objects carefully chosen by the artist are arranged in the frescoed room to investigate information and data not mediated by consciousness and not illuminated by deciphering and contextualizing their meaning. What do the DreamCast - a videogame console produced in the late 1990s by SEGA - and a tipiti - a straw weave press used to dry manioc roots in the Amazon regions of Brazil - have in common? They are objects which, by nature, will last longer than our oblivion.¹

The exhibition will be open every day from 10am to 7:30pm until 2 September 2023.

1 J.L. Borges, *Las Cosas*, in *Obra Poetica*, 1923-1977, Buenos Aires, Alianza Editorial, 1981.

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