

MIRA MAKAI

“THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM”

L21 BARCELONA

29/06 – 01/09/2023

Mira Makai is an artist who plays, who creates her pieces intuitively, without defining the final result from the outset. This fact endows her figures with an almost magical quality, turning them into small inanimate beings that, paradoxically, seem about to perform some action when one observes them. These ceramic characters make up Makai's artistic universe, in which she has found her own language inspired by mythology and ritual, creating pieces with extravagant shapes and bright colors.

Makai exhibits again at L21 with the solo show "The Calm before the Storm", presenting a set of artworks that can be interpreted separately or as part of a thematic installation that the artist refers to as "Sacrifice for the Wisest". The sculptures trigger sensations that can be contradictory. They are pleasant but also disturbing, as well as changing, since they evoke different emotions depending on the angle from where we observe them.

The scene is part of a fictional story, without beginning or end, in which Makai invites us to ask questions that may help us to find an end to this story. The artist's imagination and own experiences meet those of the viewer to shape a story that can be told in different voices. In this open story, the leader (the piece titled "Witch Doctor"), stands in the middle of the pedestal, while the other characters surround and worship him or her. From the titles of the exhibition and this installation, we can deduce that something is about to happen. Something dramatic maybe? Something transformative, or even transcendental? All scenarios are open.

Makai has once again taken inspiration from rituals, magic, and mythology to shape this project. These are themes that have always been present in art, and through the artist's imagination they become more real and contemporary. Don't we all follow a series of rituals in our day to day? We follow routines, we adore figures, and we venerate objects. Michael Pollan explains: "People have traditionally turned to ritual to help them frame and acknowledge and ultimately even find joy in just such a paradox of being human - in the fact that so much of what we desire for our happiness and need for our survival comes at a heavy cost<sup>1</sup>". In this incessant search for meaning, filled with contradictions, art has a special place. Welcome to the perfect storm!

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<sup>1</sup> Pollan, Michael. "A Place of MY Own. The Architecture of Daydream". (2008). Penguin Group.