

rodolphe janssen

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David Adamo *On the Fence*

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rodolphe janssen is pleased to announce ***On the Fence***, David Adamo's third solo exhibition at the gallery, which will take place from **October 26th to December 16th, 2023** at Livourne 35. Talking about the show, David Adamo described his most current explorations in the following terms.

"I started the process for the show funny enough with painting. Something I haven't really explored over the years as an artist, something I've definitely dreamt about but somehow too self-conscious to try. I spent the summer on a residency in Liguria at the former residence and studio of Danish artist Asger Jorn. For one month, I slept in his former bedroom, and I firmly believe he entered my dreams, and I got permission to paint by Asger's spirit. I came back to Berlin and suddenly had the urge. As if a drain had suddenly been unclogged, something started to flow. I started with small still-life studies, looking a lot at cozy old catalogs of Cézanne, Manet, Bonnard. And for the first time in a while, I was actually enjoying it, enjoying coming to the studio, enjoying painting, laughing at myself, starting to experience the world in a different way, looking at colors, the light, noticing compositions. Totally engrossed in the process, not giving a shit, which is an attitude that had been missing. Maybe it isn't always the smartest or strategic way, but arguably more important, honest and raw. I'm showing a few attempts here.

For example, in *Untitled (Elina 1)*, while I was painting over the summer, every once in a while, my partner would come over and look at my work in what I would describe as a suspicious manner, almost as if she was experiencing the mysterious waft of ripe unpleasantness. Using this as a starting point, I did a few studies of her at the studio and also at our home. Some of them I would show to her, and we would laugh uncontrollably together, which is pretty healthy, I think, or not. The thing I liked about the process is I didn't have to look far to be inspired; the everyday moments are more than enough. I followed this process for a couple months and finally built up the courage to share some of my studies with Rodolphe. He was less than enthused about them and suggested perhaps I was wasting my energy. Understandably, most people in my experience (myself included) are very resistant to change.

Deflated, I returned back to my sculptures, which had been sleeping. Over the years, I've accumulated many works which I've exhibited and, for one reason or another, ended up on a shelf in storage, in hibernation. For the works in the show, I've dragged out a few of these old friends and started to reimagine them in a different way. Trying to let the material show me something else inside. There is always somewhere else to go. I knew I wanted to work on a series of busts as, over the last 8 years, I've been studying the subject in an interdisciplinary manner. Firstly, in my training as a barber and secondly, my extensive studies and teaching of the Alexander Technique, a method specifically looking at the dynamic relationships between the head, neck and spine. With fresh eyes, I woke up the works: gouging, digging, chopping, hacking, chiseling, hammering, grinding, sanding, painting, nailing, affixing, dressing, praying, crying, but most importantly, looking and listening. I let the painting process inform how I approached these works as well, allowing color, portraiture, gesture and posture to play a larger role in the group. They reflect upon different facets of my imagination and personality: the armored discipline, stubbornness, the knot in my stomach... The confused, cloudy, shy, punky characters that lurk in my brain and hide in the material. The infectious spirit of something that was there before but is now slowly revealing itself as another. Is it Asger Jorn haunting me? I hope so... Don't know. I'm on the fence."

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About the artist:

David Adamo (b. 1979 in Rochester, NY USA. Lives and works in Berlin, Germany)

David Adamo is a sculptor 'avant la lettre' due to his engagement with form and materiality. His sculptures of chipped away wood for example, express this interest in the materiality of the object very well. These sculptures are often surrounded by the wooden fragments that were chopped off, thereby referring to the creation process of the sculptures. In his humorous small-scale sculptures Adamo plays with the expectations of the audience. These sculptures appear to be everyday objects, but by further examining them it becomes clear that the objects are removed from their traditional context due to the use of impossible materials.

— LVB

Recently, Adamo was included in solo and group exhibitions at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT, USA; The Mordes Collection, West Palm Beach, FL, US ; M.A.C – Museo de Arte Contemporaneo, Lima, Peru; Museo de Arte de Rio, Rio de Janeiro; The Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY USA ; Bielefelder Kunstverein, Bielefeld, Germany; Whitney Biennale, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY USA, among others. His work is included in the collections of The Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY USA.