

Francesco Jodice  
GIOCATOLI (TOYS)

What is Reality made of, and what are the phenomena that populate it?

Have we forsaken a slow observation of things and reality in favor of a moderate and superficial reading to maintain happiness?

Are we today embracing the happiness of the famous "last man" a creature as indestructible as the flea, living longer than any, dwelling in an eternal present, neglecting to rebuild values, and censoring death and illness?

Are we facing an eclipse of critical judgement, of study and insight?

Whether it is 'the man in the street' or 'the expert' speaking, there seems to be a prevailing tendency to easily surrender to a simplistic conception of life and the world, erasing qualitative differences and succumbing to the tyranny of opinions and perspectives. Easy to produce, easy to retract.

This epoch in which we are active participants, this fracture wherein we redefine and reconstruct our modern structures, is replete with complexities and narratives that we have forsaken by embracing a saccharine texture of reality.

We have ceased to dismantle and reassemble the layers of a reality now appearing univocal to us, populated by fetish objects arranged on a shelf.

The toys are before our eyes, and they are real.

With this exhibition Francesco Jodice deliberately sets adrift his personal confrontation with the major geopolitical tectonics, abandoning his research approach aimed at the construction of grand narrative arcs. After *West* and *City Tellers*, which lasted eight years, and *What We Want* fifteen, a 'pictorial' moment begins for Jodice, working on semiotically autonomous works, which begin and end without engaging in a narrative frame.

They are self-sustaining objects.

The exhibited works, some recent, some entirely new, some repurposed from pre-existing projects, fall within this narrative. The exhibition-narrative, with its deliberately and dangerously puerile title (TOYS) stems from the conviction that the West has planned and premeditated the lowering of our attention threshold... not of others, of the 'enemy', of our own. Over the past 10-15 years, we have been induced to gradually skim over the desire for a complex understanding of the texture of reality. Exasperated, we have declared "enough" abandoning that instinct for exploration. It was a deliberate project; there was nothing random about it. This project does not concern art in the first instance, but concerns culture in the highest sense - popular culture, culture popular culture, everyone's culture - and has also stratigraphically involved what used to be called the intelligencies. The point is that we have gradually accepted and metabolised this process abandoning ourselves to it. Hence the Black Sabbath quote - which becomes the exhibition's manifesto - and the title: there is nothing more dangerous than a blunt object deliberately misunderstood as a toy. The works presented are, like much of Jodice's recent production, 'physically beautiful' objects that anyone can ambiguously acquire, collect or enjoy. This happens, either because they are very beautiful, or because one is still able to understand that they are very dangerous, sharp objects, rituals. Toys, then, but dangerous; dangerous only for those who are still so palsied and boring as to feel a deep love for the stratigraphic reading of the environment and things around us. Otherwise, they are just objects.

And so, despite the fact that we live in the first real age of fear since the end of the cold war, we are all serene, because we have accepted and shared, this neo-imposition of a simplified reality. Everything is social, everything is all wrapped up, all on the surface.

And this is also the reason for the lack of a real press release - it's all there.

*'As Black Sabbath's Computer God goes <<[...] the objects are all around you... what more do you want? And they're real! >>. Then whether they are toys or more complex vision machines, that's up to you. There is no one left to help you, there is no state to investigate you, there is no complex reality that comes knocking at your door, it's all up to you.'*