

For the past several years Will Benedict has been working professionally as a photographer, painter and tourist. This April at Gio' Marconi, Benedict will present *Bonjour Tourist*, new works relying on various combinations of gouache paintings and cut-out studio portraits, mounted in customized aluminium and foamcore frames. Organized in distinct series, they fulfill the nominal categories of newscasters, postcards, flags, couples having dinner and nations peeking in through windows. Compared to the kind of aesthetic stimulation experienced while watching TV the works are like watching two, maybe three channels at the same time.

In Benedict's works the buzzing clamor of things, places, foods and people are fossilized in lavishly painted waxed foamcore passepartout, freezing the sadness of the tourist and audience (the same thing) into an ever so slight hypomanic mixture of euphoria and irritability. Frozen along with everyone and everything in these passepartouts are paintings on canvas depicting a tits and penis nationalism that sells food at restaurants, plane ticket to exotic locals, walls or stamps.

Social relations are stimulating, they embody growth, destruction and a reformulation of ideas. Throughout the constant remediation in Benedict's paintings, the only immutable thing is the multiplication of interpellative layers. At the opening, more guests will join the life-size photographs that populate the work and a performance by Lucy Dodd will pierce the atmosphere. With limitless attention, painting is an infinite zoom in effect that endlessly generates and penetrates the recursive layers of a falsely faustian dilemma—work or not, dine or paint, dinner, painting, dinner, painting, etc. Like a metropolitan first date where we get fat, talk, suffer nationalistic tendencies and wade through what can be done about them.

- Mathieu Malouf

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