

KIOSK

EXHIBITS Ferre Leriche (aka Bleper) *Nowhere and Back Again*

14.09 – 10.11.2024

EN I

This show consists of three interconnected aspects.

Willy, Back Again

Willy, the show's star, was conceived as an attempt at satire that quickly morphed into a therapeutic device. Through the drawing of Willy, I figured out a way to confront and work through thoughts and feelings that kept recurring and echoing in my head. Willy became a personification of my failings, fears, and frustrations, thinly disguised as societal parody. This old man became the bedrock from which all my future artistic endeavors were built.

Before I was invited to do this show it had been more than five years since I last drew Willy. Since KASK and the Bijloke were the character's birthplace, it felt like the ideal moment to dig him up from his shallow grave in my subconscious and resurrect the old man.

Willy used to be based on photographs I took of myself. At the time I sported long illustrious hair and a succulent mustache. However, to differentiate myself from Willy, his physique would be stripped bald and instead of a mustache he would grow a big bushy beard. Once I started modeling for the drawings again, the photos I took surprised me. By now, my hair was long gone and I had grown a beard as a replacement. Where I used to alter photographs of myself to draw Willy, I was now looking at a picture of Willy. Not only did I become physically more Willy-esque, the barrier between me and the character had completely fallen away. I had literally become what I used to pass off as parody. As a medium from which to process the inception of the Willy-esque psyche, various texts I had written over the past month were recorded and transformed into an audio installation that plays continuously in the exhibition space.

Past work

Throughout the years my artistic output has resulted in quite a lot of work. With every new series of drawings, I always strive to try out slightly new ideas or concepts. Nothing bores me more than depicting and realizing the same thing but with incremental changes. Some of these experiments prove to be successful and will recur and be reiterated upon in the following series, some will be written off completely,

and some will become the foundational stepping stones for my artistic practice. Throughout the wall of originals and the book (placed on a table in the exhibition space), you'll be able to follow the journey from Willy to Willy and witness the process of adding and subtracting that ended up informing my artistic style.

Behind the curtain

Behind my drawings, unfortunately my thoughts also exist. By the way of three installations I offer you a peek behind the curtain.

Not My Finest (The Wall Paneling)

Not My Finest was born out of my need to stay awake during the long and lonely night shifts at the homeless shelter I used to work at. I would draw until I reached a point where I lacked the brain capacity to create anything meaningful. Having melted my brain into oblivion I recognized I was mentally and physically incapable of making anything I could ever conceive of as my finest work. So I leaned into creating some of my least fine work. I imposed myself a challenge with rock solid rules:

- 1° Maximum of ten minutes per drawing
- 2° No time to redo or redraw anything
- 3° No time to correct spelling mistakes.

Garden sounds filled with post-jog streams of consciousness

Ever since moving to the French countryside, I routinely go for a morning run with my dog in tow. Post run, I'm unable to draw for at least half an hour due to the ungodly amount of sweat pouring out of me would ruin the paper, so instead I decided to start writing. Whatever thoughts crossed my mind during my jog would be put on paper, no exception. None of it is supposed to go anywhere, it's more or less something to occupy myself, otherwise I'd just be sitting on my sofa scrolling my life away. However, during the lead up to this exhibition, I noticed my purposeless writings offered an unfiltered view to my psyche, by way of a stream of consciousness that informs the exhibition in a way I've never attempted before. Even though my writing is not meant to evoke anyone

else's voice but mine, you'll inadvertently recognize a lot of Willy-esque musing and thoughts, thus emphasizing the breakdown of the barriers between us. Willy's existence has always been theurepatic in nature, and the more we grow together into one, the less I want to pretend that he's a hindrance to me instead of what he actually is: a safe venue from which I can explore uncomfortable questions and ideas.

The various texts I have written over the past month were recorded and transformed into an audio installation that plays continuously in the exhibition space.

The table of many ideas

Before anything is drawn, ideas have to be written down first. I managed to convert a fraction of the notes piling up on my phone into snippets covering an entire table. Some of the ideas plastered over the table have found their way onto different realized works, meanwhile many more have gone absolutely nowhere.



Bonus

Willy's World

During the duration of the exhibition, you'll get the chance to join the universe Willy inhabits. Send a photograph of yourself to info.bleper@gmail.com or via Instagram on [@projectwilly](https://www.instagram.com/projectwilly), and if I find it interesting, I might draw you. Feel free to tell me something about yourself to inform the accompanying text.

Ferre Leriche

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How many Willy's do you know?



Do you get irritated easily?



Are you up for living in the countryside?



What makes you Flemish?



Are you like Willy?



How much have you changed in ten years?

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