

This first monographic exhibition in Europe by American artist Dan Finsel (born in 1982), *Becoming Her, for Him, for He: Becoming Him, for Her, for She (Becoming Me, for Me, for Me.)* lays the radical foundations of an intense visual and psychological world that caustically and affectionately explores family mythology and frantic multiple personality disorders in today's Los Angeles. Televised teenage melodramas, post-Actors Studio identity construction, and philosophically scripted self-reflexive postures blend together, eventually enabling the artist to experiment something else through someone else – someone who could just as well be Dan Finsel himself or the pure contemporary product of self-analysis and pop culture.

Over the past few years, Dan Finsel has been forging the identity of a fictional character. This alter ego, who evolves according to Dan Finsel's relationship mainly with the family unit and adolescence, embodies both the fantasies of the Father – Farrah Fawcett buried in clay – and the features of Brenda Walsh – the archetype of the troubled teen in the series *Beverly Hills 90210*. Dan Finsel thereby evokes the violence of his own traumas, but because he treats them so indirectly (scenarios, role playing, references), these traumas go beyond the individual sphere. Through Dan Finsel, his “constantly rewritten alter ego,” they also become those of a generation. If Dan Finsel's work bears undeniable biographical evidence, his alter ego, on the other hand, erodes the very idea of authenticity in the artist's persona. It is virtually impossible to find a beginning or an end to the acting, the schizophrenia, the deconstruction, the faking, or to tell who is talking to whom about whom. A way of multiplying the occurrences of Dan Finsel and playing “invisible man” in times of global networking. On the occasion of his monographic exhibition at the CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, the artist has put together a series of twenty or so videos, paintings, photographs, sculptures, and installations, which transform the museum's gallery into the elegant den of a contemporary, identity-focused cannibal. The visitor finds himself immersed in a world minutely orchestrated by the artist, where unexpected moments of philosophical clarity such as “the past is the past, the future is the future” or “I'm shy about people knowing things” contrast sharply with the principles of absolute perfection and optimization that define our time.

- Alexis Vaillant

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