

In *jours de relâche*, Margot Pietri invites the viewer to adopt the position of a kind of pedestrian or stroller inside a space where scale ratios and boundaries between inside and outside reveal themselves to be floating. We enter the exhibition like in a kind of enigmatic urbanism composed of small architectures perched on large pedestals and paintings whose sculpted hanging systems and frontality remind us of shutters. The whole resonates with an impression of retreat on a domestic/interior space whose access to us will remain more or less barred. The chromatic unity of the whole, a violet blue diluted as the ink, is a kind of compromise between the color of late-century melancholy and that of the ultra-violet rays diffused by the screens responsible for our contemporary visual fatigue.

At the base of this exhibition, there is a fiction, still being written by the artist, in which a community of characters occupy their nights of insomnia, very precisely between midnight and two o'clock, exchanging stories on forums. It is about a reappropriation of this "disease" of the night by forms of resilient and resistant socialities. Margot Pietri was then examining the history of the relationship to sleep and its gradual restructuring under late capitalism. Many anthropologists have indeed highlighted the fact that continuous sleep, in relation to which insomnia has been constituted as a "disease," was not the norm until the Industrial Revolution; nights often occurred in two phases, with a one or two-hour wake period during which it was common to engage in various domestic, introspective, or social activities. If Margot Pietri has retained the idea of converting the "dead" time of the night into a space for the emergence of fiction, in her exhibition it is the forms, gestures, and choices of material configurations that, without words, take charge of the narratives. It is indeed important that her sculptural practice is not an illustration of her writing work, but that between these two independent practices circulates an underground solidarity.

The installation includes a serie of sculptures made with resin and jesmonite, whose surface glaze interacts with the surrounding space. All of them depict identifiable types of architecture, also reflecting different social positions: a skyscraper, a pavilion, a downtown building, a HLM tower, or even a Japanese house. All these buildings have facades devoid of details, as if sketched with a candid spontaneity, just enough to produce a signal of recognition. Thus reworked as archetypes, some referring to environments already habited by the artist, others to commonplaces of the globalized architectural imagination, Margot Pietri has given them a artisanal "patina," a kind of tremor, a softness, inscribing in a material state the slowing down, and subtly deviating the logic of standardized objects that she continues to summon. Placed inside each of these sculptures, teleprompters loop a micro-scene in animated drawings via the screen of a mobile phone reflected in a one-way mirror: a hand trying to erase a watch stuck to its skin, a turtle and legs moving in unison, - all fleeting motifs that resurrect archetypal dreams related to delay and bodily numbness. But these micro-scenes, akin to "flashes" reminiscent of gifs, disappear when in proximity to the sculptures, leaving the spectator in a kind of frustration for not being able to get a close-up view of them. The interiority or the ability to access a state of reverie here becomes a function of distance, perhaps also thereby torn from scrutiny, maintained as a clandestine apparition.

If a somewhat animistic magic envelops the "active" objects of Margot Pietri, it is nevertheless constantly put into tension with its "reverse." As one moves around the sculptures, the facade's unity unravels to reveal a hollow space, exposing the teleprompter mechanism, and here bringing the house back to a kind of deserted envelope, perhaps close to ruin, or a small lo-fi shadow theater: a living space paradoxically compartmentalized and permeated by the sphere of control and continuous surveillance. The pedestals, oversized platforms, accentuate the sensation of precariousness and instability of the micro-structures.

We also find here a vocabulary of forms constantly activated in her work through the reference to the design of technical and industrial objects: time clocks, computer towers, imaginations of the data center, all of this objects which are irreparably out of service, and which thus become susceptible to hosting other fictions and other relationships to time... This reference to sophisticated techniques of recording, storing, and archiving, which account for, rhythm, and direct our flows, confronts other more archaic markings: counting hours or days by a mark on a wall or a calendar, grooves on a blind depending on the height of the sun, strange compasses evoking ancient cosmological systems.

This increasingly cadenced world in an uninterrupted continuum, where nights are becoming more porous with days, recalls the one that Jonathan Crary described in a pessimistic observation as that of post-history: "A world without shadow, illuminated 24/7, amputated of the otherness that

constitutes the engine of historical change." (...). The 24/7 time is a time of indifference, where the fragility of human life becomes less and less important, where sleep is neither necessary nor inevitable. We align ourselves with the existence of inanimate, inert, or timeless things. Margot Pietri, in her artistic appropriation of the theme of sleep and relaxation, resonates with Jonathan Crary's observations through the very materiality of her objects. But in her work, the identification with "inert things," the themes of psychic insularity, retreat into the private sphere, and the growing disinterest in the political and collective space, are seen as being reversed in their own logic. Micro-movements or acts of resistance that the spectator must watch for are, for the artist, a sign of the regeneration of empathetic and sensitive faculties.

On one of the artwork hanging on the wall, feet fanned out and patterns of blinds as if carved in stone evoke napping and relaxation as a strategy of diverting energies "to loss," a revisitation of Bartleby-like passive resistance (I would prefer not to) in light of a desire for degrowth. An idea that can be found in the urgency that emerges from these inscriptions, which punctuate the surfaces of her wall pieces like sorts of lingering images. Taking the historically marginal situation of the artist in relation to the field of productivity, which from Malevich to Duchamp has maintained a long history with dissident laziness, Margot Pietri makes a sidestep, further nurturing her reflection on the mechanisms and techniques that discriminate between interiority and exteriority, activity and passivity, the self and the other, the object and the subject. A world where fallen machines and spaces of life in the process of collapse begin to harbor a new secret language, and where fiction allows to take over from reality and its social conventions.