

For his 3rd solo show at Nicodim Gallery, Ciprian Mureșan presents two sets of works which share a common focus on the relation between art and power; two instances in which art can be considered deprived of its freedom.

The first part of the exhibition relates to the means through which religion has instrumentalized art and education in order to exercise its power over society and influence it, in the past as well as in recent years; one example being the inclusion of religion as a mandatory class in primary school in post-1989 Romania.

The artist copies various images depicting altar pieces from catalogues of Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque art – art which is characterized by strong canons and rules. The 150 resulting drawings are then engraved on the brass panels of school benches, in subsequent layers which by multiple superimposition start to deteriorate the drawing itself.

The second part of the exhibition directly addresses the way totalitarian regimes have used art for propaganda purposes. Starting from a social realist work of the Romanian sculptor, Ion Irimescu (the torso of a young worker's activist), Ciprian Mureșan fabricates a plaster-cast replica. The negative mold obtained through the casting process is the starting point of this installation. Through the successive process of casting and the insertion of the mold itself into the process as an original (obtained through the construction of consequent molds in order to obtain it) – the technical process of sculpture making becomes a useless and absurd mechanism, a generator of objects deceptively functional. Representing imaginary rings of time, the installation resembles sections of a tree trunk, where each layer of the casting process becomes more diluted and detached from the original, becoming more and more abstract, as if the levels of interpretation, the diverse contexts added in time, detach the original from its initial function of propaganda and slowly transform it into a museum object.

Ciprian Mureșan, born 1977, lives and works in Cluj. Previous solo exhibitions include: Ludwig Museum, Budapest (2015), Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2013), Plan B Berlin (2013), Tate Modern, London (2012, with Anna Molska), Centre d'art contemporaine Geneva (2012), FRAC Champagne-Ardenne (2011), Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (2010). Previous group exhibitions include: *Six Lines of Flight*, Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) San Francisco (2012), *Image to be projected until it vanishes*, MUSEION Bolzano (2011), *Promises From the Past*, Centre Pompidou Paris (2010), Sydney Biennial (2010), *The Seductiveness of the Interval*, the Romanian Pavilion at the 53rd Venice Biennale (2009), The Renaissance Society Chicago (2010), *The Generational: Younger Than Jesus*, New Museum New York (2009).

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