

OTHERWHEN

CORMIO, Giuseppe Desiato, Gianna Surangkanjanajai

Curated by Luca Lo Pinto and Chiara Siravo

14. 9. – 19. 10. 2024

OTHERWHEN, curated by Luca Lo Pinto and Chiara Siravo, presents works by artists Gianna Surangkanjanajai (1991) and Giuseppe Desiato (1935–2024) and by independent fashion brand CORMIO (2019). Spanning generations, geographies and mediums, the group exhibition is a collapsed time capsule, a day in the living archive of the syncretic, opaque and dis-articulate present we inhabit, in which nothing is what it sounds like. The overall suggestion is that each work exists spatially, temporally and culturally outside of its own material boundaries, like a stream that would like to burst, but can only do so metaphorically.

An *ex voto* is a humble gift offered by a person who received mercy from *above*, it is the material trace of a rite, a time capsule that holds the memory of the intent and gestures of the giver as well as the traces of a misfortune or lived experience, overcome. They are objects that cut across time, capable of disappearing for a while and then re-appearing, often resisting notions of temporality or evolution, at least conceptually. This strange tension both holds and transcends specificity, both contingent and in turn malleable. Some early *ex voto*'s are in fact made out of wax, offering the practical option of reshaping the votive image based on need and mirroring the plasticity of life itself. The exhibition at Croy Nielsen presents three bodies of works that at once belong to and resist archival impulses (with somewhat ritualistic or sacred undertones), in distinct ways, whilst sharing the employment of the artificial: spanning acrylic, nylon, AI, and the deceptive waning glister of pop.

Giuseppe Desiato's series of *Ex Voto*'s was made between 1965 and 1975 and sits within a wider practice that elaborated on the shifting languages of southern Italian popular culture in *the* epoch when everything began to change. Performative and ephemeral, his oeuvre is compelling and difficult to grasp: employing and overlapping the body, the camera, painting and collage, it is rooted in everyday life. Desiato never hid his process and rejected commodification, drawing from and engaging with fluxus, Viennese Actionism and body art. The four *Ex Voto*'s on display trap the spectacle and profanity of a new society in the making, with a result that seems suspended between a votive image and a relic. The sacred corpses of an ongoing present..

Gianna Surangkanjanajai presents a new series of four, untitled acrylic glass tubes each encapsulating 14 kg of liquid paint in ketchup red, mayo cream, mustard yellow, and relish green. Part of an ongoing body of work, these transparent tubes apparently solidify, and transform the behavior of, a material that, let loose, would otherwise essentially make a mess. Neatly archived into these vitrine-like tubes, this uncontainable substance is reined-in, unable to perform its designated function for as long as it remains trapped.

Why you scared? is the audio installed in the hallway that permeates throughout the gallery space. Conceived by Jezabelle Cormio, creative director and founder of CORMIO, and made in collaboration with Valentina de Zanche for the label's SS24 runway show, it features different sounding AI generated voices in a monologue, cum

stream of consciousness, written by the two.

The box, the tube, the voice-box that isn't a voice, separately and together perform as stand-ins for lived experience and the body itself, illustrating the suspension between the animate and inanimate worlds we desperately want to grasp.

* *OTHERWHEN* is dedicated to the memory of Giuseppe Desiato who passed away during the preparation of this exhibition.

The exhibition is part of *curated by* – the gallery festival with international curators in Vienna.

