

PARDON MY LANGUAGE

Curated by Tomokazu Matsuyama

Wim Delvoye, Carlos Rolón/Dzine, Robert Lazzarini, Tomokazu Matsuyama, Jayson Musson and Alison Elisabeth Taylor.

Opening reception on January 18th from 6 to 9 pm

Exhibition dates: January 19 – March 3, 2018

'Pardon my Language' is an exploration of how Globalization has changed our perception of cultural identity and how 'identity' is shifting and changing in the 20th/21st Century. The exhibition, curated by Tomokazu Matsuyama, aims to examine the blurred social and cultural boundaries which make our time and place unique. A printed catalogue will be published including a curatorial essay by Peter Doroshenko, Executive Director of Dallas Contemporary.

Text by Peter Doroshenko :

Language is a skin: I rub my language against the other. It is as if I had words instead of fingers, or fingers at the tip of my words. My language trembles with desire.

- Roland Barthes

The very definition of the real becomes: that of which it is possible to give an equivalent reproduction. The real is not only what can be reproduced, but that which is always already reproduced. The hyper-real.

- Jean Baudrillard

Looking at the linguistic singularities produced by individual artists one considers the ways in which they relate to connections that tend to establish uniformity in norms of production. The norms for art production find their roots in the ethics of the individual artists who bravely represent the scene of a historical condition that for the moment seems to be irreversible.

Yet, it's 2018 and the art works in *Pardon My Language* demonstrate structural characteristics derived from common features of cultural contexts in Europe and North America. Even if art tends towards the production of historically privileged objects, it also finds its sphere of action within a system of interconnecting functions that separately refer to a variety of agents and cultural forces.

The art world includes artists, gallerists, collectors, museum directors, critics and the public at large, and it constitutes the natural habitat in which the products of creativity are born, developed, and circulated (they are all present, and actively involved with this group exhibition). The work's initial identity as an artwork acquires a cultural plus value resulting from the support of other forces, persons, and functions that come into play in an ever more international art circuit.

From this point of view, every movement and its generation of artists are subjected to microscopic examination, a certain method of scrutiny, which tends to function in terms of objectivity and internationality. These terms are the up-to-date technocratic counterparts of traditionally auric notion of the immortality of art.

The artwork now manifests itself in terms of its objective presence as a formal structure and no longer as a process or event; its duration is both measured in terms of space and in the ability to defend its specificities within the various contexts in which it circulates. In this way, the work's incorporation into the art system highlights its existence and stimulates a form of social response that confers the status of objective presence to the formal result of a mode of production initially steeped in fantasy, and exclusively connected to the artist's ability to create a personally significant image. If the art of the past is the art reproduced in art history books, the art of the present is art that is observed, accepted, and reinforced by the art system.

The proverbial value of quality as specifically and necessarily characteristic of artworks now becomes not only the artist's sphere, but also that of the other agents who exercise a function within this system. A kind of elective affinity, paradoxical and objective, articulates itself throughout the international art circuit along the lines that subject the horizontal stratification of art production to a series of vertical measurements.

These measurements concern the varied levels of cultural policy that correspond to the activities of the various participants in the system. And this inevitably creates an economic and operative solidarity based on common aesthetic taste, which is the support and launching pad for the diffusion of the artwork.

With the mass production of art, which is ever more widely distributed in a society with an industrial system promoting a general access to culture, the lines of vertical tendency take the upper hand and impose a kind of art that is principally and initially legible through movements and common poetics.

These movements and poetics become the protective nurturing places well as the magnifying glass that then reveal the capacity to individuate the presence of the individual artist and the individual artworks.

If image is the ineluctable result that marks the final destination of every form of behavior, it is likewise clear that the total image, since prestige and social reverberation result from the qualitative power of an entire series of individual activities, is what functions as the basis for determining that cultural plus value, which is essential for establishing the existence of the artwork.

By now a kind of post-conceptual art is manifest in Europe and North America, typified by the significant presence of the cultural agents that flank the artist. The predominant symbolic value of money has shattered the idealistic hierarchy that once constituted the terms in which art was to be considered.

If former ideological schemes used to determine the existence of a dichotomy inhabited on the one hand by culture (the artist and critic) and on the other by economics (the market and collectors), this dichotomy has now been destroyed by the high specialization of individual agents within the art system.

The forces represented by these various mediators interpenetrate, encounter, and conflict with one another in a dialectic that is capable of constantly shifting the privileged point of view from which society judges the artwork. By now, the specialization of labour has also become germane to art production; it determines the existence of powerful contexts that are no longer a simple question of economic approval (the market) or the approval in terms of taste (the collectors), which initially functioned as mechanisms of comment and reinforcement.

The critics, the market, the collectors, the museums, and the public are now representative of specialized activities that exert a vigorous influence on art production, determining the directions of research by means of tangible shifts in taste. Mass society, paradoxically enough, accepts art because of the very fact of its existence and no longer poses questions concerning its function and finalities except by way that it extends through into the 21st century, the possibility for a moment of enormous development and social expansion.

This is the homogenized context in which European and North American art find themselves, accepting the articulation of a system that is what it is and representing the arrival of technological advancement and post-conceptual ideas that relate to all activities in terms of their probable absorption, which here implies the consumption of art as a form of social privilege.

The artists in *Pardon My Language* don't so much simulate the importance of their work as rather draw attention to the historical impossibility of employing their own language as an instrument for the modification of the prospects of history. What they do is more a question of showing us the prospects inherent within the social consumption of art and revealing the learning mechanisms that it produces, including those mechanisms connected to the possible production of cultural value.

Wim Delvoye

Similar to a film director with access to the most advanced photorealistic advances in computer-generated effects, Wim Delvoye reshapes common everyday objects that we know and might use. Delvoye composes his works carefully to create compelling narratives. At first glance, his objects seem to be decisive moments in a larger narrative, captured and frozen, but the surrounding information remains exclusive to the viewer. By fabricating and staging his own reality, Delvoye takes complete control, contrasting banal situations and a subliminal world of conflict. Yet, his newest works map conceptual territory for the construction and documentation of objects and interior spaces that involve people. With these works, these spaces are unthinkable within existing theoretical frameworks. It creates a relational approach to issues of historical architecture and current interiors to counter object approaches that characterize documentary thought.

Carlos Rolón/Dzine

Using abundant sets of signs and codes from every flowing stream of post-Baroque visual overindulgences, Carlos Rolón captures, isolates and enhances decorative images and shapes reminiscent of historical spheres from centuries past. In his work he likes the tacility of painting and sculpture. Rolón uses painting as the most recognizable sign of art while introducing, sculpture and installations that reflect a new artistic thought. Rolón's work is primarily concerned with how the spectacle has affected the individual in contemporary culture. His works move between the territories of dominant culture, popular culture and diverse subcultures. Rolón is interested in how people define themselves through their individually constructed identity and how they present this to the world. Superficially script in style, Rolón's works have nothing to do with action or animation. His works never carry elements of movement - even though they may seem to do so.

Robert Lazzarini

Rooted with advanced aesthetic cryptographs and elements reminiscent of artworks from the future, the works of Robert Lazzarini consistently reveal themselves to amaze the not cognizant viewer. In this context, the montage of information is the language of the avant-garde that declared a new attitude to reality. It is a precarious synthesis of extreme fantasy and extreme sobriety, the pictorial techniques of perfection and the realism of the fragment. This re-orchestrated information is a familiar method of mass-culture, with its advertising and high design, one that reflects the multifacetedness of the world, synchronism of perception, and a synthesis of reflection of image. For Lazzarini, this is the new hyper-reality. This is the language of the age of mechanical reproduction, the age of photo realities. As the product of both the materialism and the utopia of the industrial era, it is the embodiment of the fragmentation of post-industrial culture. He carefully arranges works that are situated between the avant-garde and today. They exude fragility, but they are pastiche. It is all about the re-interpretation of the innovative and the emergence of nostalgia for it. Yet, Lazzarini's sculptures and paintings exhibit, among other things, his utmost devotion to the specific skills that the classic mediums entail and by his total command over them.

Jayson Musson

Dense, compact lines and vibrant colors form matrix patterns harking to cosmos based particles analogies - to the point of being violent and unsettling. The patterns insinuate non-western or contemporary urban textiles, yet Musson's orchestrations move beyond garments into plaques of dense data. Musson creates multi-leveled, mixed-media objects that explore themes of identity, exile, cultural relevance, sexual identification, and emotionally compelling issues. Like an archaeologist, he is always on the look-out for whatever pushes the limits of his past and his present. His work is the product of complex deliberations. Producing images from his own reality, Musson offers only that which is already embedded in our memory, like a reference point of what is lost or a temporal experience of an eternal recurrence. With the glut of imagery in the world from various media he chooses images from his own world - not narrative per se - as a way to organize the formal elements of his work. Elements from public activities and situations such as literature, music, travel, family and friends influence his work as a way to make them accessible to a broader audience. He uses the act of painting as the most recognizable sign of art while introducing elements that reflect a new artistic thought. He is interested in how people define themselves through their publicly manifested constructed identities.

Tomokazu Matsuyama

Serene and visually layered to the point of multi-narratives in a contemporary manner, we are invited to enter the complex theatrical backdrops of Tomokazu Matsuyama's artworks. Yet, Matsuyama's paintings are not minimal. The works have been purified and reduced to one form of basic production. They are basic thoughts consisting of canvas and paint. Through this process of purification, the paintings almost become anonymous global icons. Though the artist's ego remains in the background, Matsuyama expects the viewers to actively look at the paintings. He asks viewers of his paintings to mentally participate along with him... to attempt to discover the structure of the pictorial plane, which at times engages in direct confrontation with the works. They are aesthetically appealing, while at the same time they teach us something about the idiosyncrasies of the medium. Matsuyama is interested in the theatrics of painting. He is not content with free abstraction, but is a distant relative of American Realism with Manga and French Surrealist influences. He, however, brings the surrealist play with elements from reality to an abstract level.

Alison Elizabeth Taylor

Frozen in photographic styles similar to photojournalistic images, people and landscapes are transposed through textures and materials with science fictional inspired feel and flow. Puzzle and data bit inspired, the works carry deep and complex information. At first glance, Alison Elizabeth Taylor's art objects appear to be historically wrapped or packaged events. But her rhetoric has an underhanded virtuosity, capable of producing unexpected effects with a bit of black humor tossed in discreetly to present the final ensemble. As the architect Le Corbusier once remarked, the purpose of architecture is to move us, then in her work Taylor consistently realizes architecture's highest aim: she creates works whose extraordinary power lies not only in how deeply they make us feel, but also in how they let us see the complexity of our feelings, in meaningful environments which help us to dwell.

Peter Doroshenko Kyiv, Ukraine