

ERIC VAN HOVE | TESTOSTERONE

opening:
thursday february 27th 2014 from 19:00 h
exhibition:
from february 28th to april 30th 2014

Voice Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of the solo show by Eric van Hove at its exhibition space.

Eric van Hove, already participating in the 5th Marrakesh Biennale with the large scale project Larak V12, will transform the Voice gallery's spaces with a site-specific installation.

"**Testosterone**" will invade the *white cube* of Voice with motors and gears taken from a mechanical workshop and spread on the gallery floor. The acrid scent of motors' lubricants and over used original parts constitutes the background to the presentation of a series of sculptures, mounted on a pedestal, representing parts of mechanical motors reproduced in different materials, various types of wood, brass, copper, aluminium, stone, bone, etc, realised by local craftsmen.

"The question of the nature of the work of art, at the heart of the V12 project, once again raises the paradigm that contemporary art has been confronting with since it came into being. (...) Van Hove succeeds in the impossible gamble of trying to reconcile the irreconcilable. To make art accessible to everyone, not theoretically or by taking a populist stance, but through an action that does not set out to superimpose discourse over a tangible reality." As written by Simon N'jami in **The Absolute Heart** (excerpt from an up-coming publication on van Hove's sculptural approach – Malika éditions/Casablanca & Motto/Berlin). Eric van Hove's work, in fact, is rooted in the social and economical context in which it intervenes. The motor, therefore, rises as a metaphor of Moroccan economical system and, at the same time, of industrial production. But, mainly, the pieces shown in the gallery, with that synthesis that only sculpture can inform, narrate the reflection, developed by post-colonial studies, on the relation between a local paradigm of production and the globalised market, reflecting on the critical and authorial relationship, internal to the art world, between artist-designer and artisan-maker.

The artist erects at the centre of the gallery a series of sculptures which emerge from the soil occupied by the relicts of an industrial culture that produces, along with technological development, the appearance of mass production and consumption. On the contrary, the artisanal reproduction of motors that, without the interpretation of a luddist idea, underlines the procedural nature of the gesture of production and the capability of the artisanal society to auto-regenerate following those dynamics that mix and make hybrid cultures and knowledge.

In the time of its technical reproducibility, the art work, according to Walter Benjamin, would disappear in favour of a serial copy whose connection to the original would have been indeed cut to give space to the vast sequence of identical specimens. The time of artisanal reproduction – to be precise the time preceding the revolution indicated by Benjamin in his well known essay – instead, saw a series of similar objects referring, in a hierarchic and qualitative relation, to a unique original. But what happened, instead, when the question of reproducibility, the hand-crafted one, is raised in the time of technical reproduction, where everything is the same? What is the relation between artistic object, reproduced with craftsmanship, and the original which is, again, a technical reproduction (copy of a copy without original)?

The artist stages this paradox subverting the flattening of the actual presence of the individual, artist or executor, on each phase of the project. Such condition is that of alienation and hyper-specialisation of work, but also that of consumption, on a global scale, of the economy of ideas in a post-Fordist condition. Van Hove on his side shows these economical processes at the basis of contemporary capitalist societies, collaborating with other authorships and opening his atelier to a variety of artisans.

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