

# *The Remains of the Day*

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**Saādane Afif, Rossella Biscotti, Théo Mercier,  
Enzo Mianes, Oscar Muñoz and Rosângela Rennó**

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**26 January - 2 March, 2019**

**Opening**

**Saturday, 26 January — 6pm - 9pm**

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*Rossella Biscotti, A shirt, blue pants, blue jeans, a towel, 2018. Exhibition view, Kunst-Station Sankt Peter, Cologne*

**The Remains of the Day** (*Les vestiges du jour*) is part of an exhibition cycle started by **mor charpentier** in 2018 with the collective exhibition **Unfinished Portrait**. While in the latter, the works delved on the history of portraiture and its interlinings with memory, in the present show it is the materiality of the works that leads our research into the rhizomatic nature of remembrance.

The works by **Saādane Afif, Rossella Biscotti, Théo Mercier, Enzo Mianes, Oscar Muñoz** and **Rosângela Rennó** presented in the exhibition, make use of the ethos, both material and symbolic, of stones, pointing to a renewed approach to an ageless material associated throughout the history of art to ideas of permanency and the continuation of tradition. The artists question these precise values and introduce, each in their own way, varying views on the subjectivities at play in the construction of history and memory.

A technicality, a glitch, an instant in which meaning is suspended and up for grabs, a "**Vice de forme**". In **Saādane Afif's** eponymous sculpture from 2017-2018, a Carrara-marble cylinder, sphere and cube connect with two distant works of art: the first is Man Ray's sculpture "Presse papier à Priape" (1920-1970), a composition of three spheres and a cylinder arranged to create a phallic image; and Reiser's cartoon from 1974 in which,

after a terrorist attack, a nuclear plant shifts its shape to resemble a dysfunctional sculpture by Man Ray. **Afif's** piece stands as a physical trace of Ray's and Reiser's meeting.

By connecting different temporalities and materialising a seemingly impossible encounter, **Afif** creates an illustration of the playful polyphony that springs out of a timeless artistic dialogue.

If in **Afif's** works the symbolic grandiosity of white marble is subverted when used to facetiously represent a popular joke, in the work of **Théo Mercier** it is colour that is employed as an element of discrepancy between the popular and the scholarly. In "**Masterpieces of Art No. 32**", **Mercier** refers to the covers of a magazine by fascicles published by Hachette in the 1960s. Presented in the flashy visual style of the time, the isolated ethnographical objects portrayed on the covers as the apex of human culture, ended up becoming accidental pop icons. The visual disparity is recreated by the artist by juxtaposing the same ancient objects used by Hachette to fluorescent backgrounds that create a visual clash of epochs: "as if a work of Pop Art had the Callipygian Venus in the place of Jackie Kennedy", as **Mercier** points out.

Placed nearby, **Rosângela Rennó's** "**Bodas de porcelana**" (2017) is a commemoration of her emblematic piece

“**Ceremônia do Adeus**” originally presented in the 1997 Havana Biennial. In this series, **Rennó** presented dozens of photos of couples in the culminating moment of their wedding: the instant they leave the church, happily waving from the backseat of a modern car. To celebrate the 20th anniversary of this piece, **Rennó** used a series of found porcelain plates that have been locked face to face and hanged directly on the wall, as if representing the couples that, through the equation of marriage, have become – for better or worst, through very fragile means and until death sets them apart– eternally merged. **Rennó**’s ironic take towards one of the Catholic Church’s major and most enduring traditions is expressed in the fragility of the mineral material chosen, one that contrasts with the supposedly perpetual quality of the bond that marriage creates between a couple.

While on some works the traditional ideas attached to materials, whether Carrara marble -noble, classic-, porcelain –durable, delicate-, or volcanic stone -ancient, exotic-, contributes to the artist’s often satirical commentaries on culture and society; in **Rossella Biscotti**’s, **Enzo Mianes**’ and **Oscar Muñoz**’ works, it is the very density of the materials that underlines the gravity of the treated subject-matters.

A case in point is **Rossella Biscotti**’s “**A shirt, blue pants, blue jeans, a towel**” (2018) an installation composed of spheres and cubes cast in concrete. Placed on the floor

of the gallery, the grey objects betray some colourful traces on their surfaces which, upon closer inspection, turn out to be those of garments: sweaters, t-shirts and other clothes donated by the people of Cologne. The clothes offer an element of hope in human solidarity. It is the belief of the artist that, in the same way that these textiles introduce a certain fragility into the core of the concrete sculptures; that same human will is able to unite to break free from any kind of oppression.

Similarly, **Enzo Mianes** deals with the remains of conflicts in his new series “**Les contrejours**”, in which he creates a installation that literally brings to light an instant from past human struggles. From Germany to Cuba, Mianes recovers seemingly inconsequential fragments of history and renders them visible with subtle elegance.

The trauma of human conflict is equally latent in the work of **Oscar Muñoz**, present in the exhibition with the new work “**Doméstico II**”. Composed by a two-meter long marble shelf upon which stand two dozen white portrait frames also carved in marble, the piece creates a chromatic and material unity that renders anonymous what would otherwise be a lively assemblage of colours, textures, and faces. By stripping these objects of the subjectivities that makes them unique, the artist turns our attention towards what makes them universal: the heavy and permanent-as-stone emptiness left behind by human absence.

## List of works

<p><b>Saädane Afif</b></p> <p>-</p> <p><b>Vice de forme</b> 2017-2018 Polished marble 21 x 21 x 21cm; Ø 16cm; H: 60cm, Ø 26,5cm Unique piece</p> <p><b>Vice de forme (Lyrics)</b> 2016 Vinyl text</p>	<p><b>Théo Mercier</b></p> <p>-</p> <p><b>Chefs-d’œuvre de l’art n°32</b> 2016 Framed C-Print, painted frame 153 x 98 x 5cm Unique piece</p> <p><b>Désastre</b>, 2016 Steel chain, resine, plaster Variable dimensions Unique piece</p> <p><b>Un papa, une maman</b> 2018 Moai heads on stone, petrified egg, white plinth Dimensions of installation: 22 x 23 x 11cm Dimensions of plinth: 120 x 30 x 30cm Unique piece</p>	<p><b>Enzo Mianes</b></p> <p>-</p> <p><b>Les Contrejours</b>, 2018 Metal, candle, mineral fragment 32 x 4 x 12 cm Unique pieces</p> <p><b>Oscar Muñoz</b></p> <p>-</p> <p><b>Doméstico II</b> 2018 White marble 400cm long x 35cm wide. Tallest sculpture on top: 35cm Edition of 3 + 2AP</p> <p><b>Rosângela Rennó</b></p> <p>-</p> <p><b>Bodas de porcelana</b> 2017 Engraved porcelain plates, acrylic and painted stainless steel hangers Variable dimensions Unique pieces</p>
<p><b>Rossella Biscotti</b></p> <p>-</p> <p><b>A shirt, blue pants, blue jeans, a towel</b>, 2018 Series of sculptures Concrete, various used textiles Dimensions variable Unique pieces</p>		