



JOEY RAMONE

BOOTH 45
17 - 21.05.2017

YASSER BALLEMANS

Weapons of Choice (2014)
Ceramics
Various dimensions

Weapons of Choice displays a compilation of extraordinary ceramic objects. They are almost symbolic weapons or trophies, by means of which **Yasser Ballemans** celebrates the triumph of the arts. In times of crisis and cut-backs, the artist has become a warrior against cold statistics and for imagination. *Art is a choice*, according to Ballemans, *especially now*.

With their irregular contours and cut-out shapes, the figures of Yasser Ballemans refer to oriental ornaments and Japanese origami. They are often open constructions of loose and large angular planes. As a result of the use of various materials, such as metal, synthetics, ceramics, wood and paper, allied to ever-changing combinations of forms and colors, new and surprisingly dynamic sculptural figures are constantly created. Although each has its own expression, the works are clearly akin to one another. Occasionally the figurative elements establish a direct relationship with the visible world. In other cases, only abstract elements have been used, but they nevertheless evoke figures or objects from the tangible world.

Ballemans's ceramic Weapons of Choice are not weapons for killing. They have a symbolic function. They are trophies that give expression to the victory of art over unimaginative everyday reality. This being the case, these objects harmonize perfectly with Ballemans's six-meter-tall Triumphal Arch that Museum de Fundatie purchased jointly with Mojo Concerts/Lowlands in 2013. For three successive summers, this steel arch has travelled to the Lowlands Festival in Biddinghuizen, and for the rest of the year it is on permanent display in the Sculpture Garden of Kasteel het Nijenhuis. With his work, Ballemans wishes to demonstrate that it is exactly in difficult times that the arts are needed in order to stimulate new ideas and to open up new perspectives. Ballemans thus articulates a plea for a re-evaluation of the ceremonial. By means of trophies and triumphal arches, and also parade floats and costumes for example, he wishes to ensure that the arts again form a symbol for positive social values.

This work was exhibited at Kasteel het Nijenhuis in Heino/Wijhe.

It was realized during a residency at the European Ceramic Work Center and was supported by the Mondriaan Fund.

VARIOUS ARTISTS:
Hélène Thensiau and Lima Drib

Moules (laced water), roibe (2015)
River water, various metals on paper
(copper, aluminum, iron, gold, silver, zinc)

Water is the new oil. Water supplies are privatized goods in our current times and are owned by big world leading companies. The challenges the world is facing around water are immense. There are no unilateral laws yet, and nobody takes responsibility. Water will become the world's next major security and economic challenge. *One way or another, water will soon be moved around the world as oil is now.**

Moules, a work within *Água com Gás*, poetically researches a myriad of water related topics, from the privatization of water supplies, pollution, the depletion of water resources by industrial agriculture to water fasting.

During a trip through Southern Europe **Various Artists** were confronted with scenes of completely changed landscapes caused by the construction of hydroelectric dams. Such large projects subsidized by the E.U. are a way to generate energy and to ensure water supply for industrial agriculture at the expense of the original flora, fauna and culture of an ancient landscape. *Drowning Bonsai* recreates the image of drowned olive groves and confronts us with the extreme impact culture can have on nature.

* World Bank

Água com Gás is part of *The Great K* an ongoing research by Various Artists on the influences of globalization. Several topics resulted in exhibitions, workshops, publications or are still ongoing, for example: about the food industry (*Le Château*, Luisa Strina, São Paulo, 2012), the agribusiness (*Zea Mays*, Muac, Mexico City and Mupo, Museo de Textil, Oaxaca, 2014), on water (*Água com Gas*, Galleria Continua, San Gimignano, 2015), on the commercialisation of belief (*Camino Welt*, 2016 -) and on the Walmartization of Europe (*Saudade de Europa*, Pixelache Festival, 2016 -).

The title *Água com Gás* originated in São Paulo at an interview during the build up of the show at Luisa Strina (2012). VA realised that *Le Château* was part of a bigger plan and invented on the spot the *The Great K* project. Because they were only drinking water (preferably sparkling water) during the fast (proposed by Morice de Lisle) the water topic got named *Água com Gaz*.

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