

GALERIE MARIA BERNHEIM

Friend ? ?

Darren Bader, Mathew Cerletty, Marguerite Humeau, Alissa McKendrick, Ebecho Muslimova, Chadwick Rantanen
22 April - 27 May 2017

"My parents kept me in a closet for years. Until I was fifteen I thought I was a suit".

The idea for **Friend ? ?** sprung from ongoing conversations with Mathew Cerletty, from observing, from cultural differences and from bonding experiences.

A few years ago, the Swiss National Museum attempted to put together an exhibition supposedly exploring and defining Swiss humor. Perhaps the island mentality has been the fertile soil for a very tongue-in-cheek vision and appreciation of life. On the other hand, they seem to be more reluctant to laugh at an episode of *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. **Friend ? ?**, after the title of a Neil Jenney painting, brings together a wide variety of artists working in different mediums, most of them being shown for the first time in Switzerland.

Darren Bader known for his works that ask the viewer to actively participate presents a group of sculptures.

Mathew Cerletty's paintings have explored over the past decade an idea of surreality, of an extraordinary distinctive reality in the most realistic manner. The subject matters being only alibis for making windows into a different world.

Marguerite Humeau creates environments that force the viewer into a different history, a plausible one. The sculptures are weird people, like E.T., we are forced to interact with them and acknowledge their existence, thus questioning our own bodily envelope.

Alissa McKendrick puts on a story, perhaps akin to an evil Roald Dahl, leaving the possibility of absurd situations and their scenarios to be elaborated.

Ebecho Muslimova brings to life her alter ego, Fatebe, putting her through a wide array of ridiculous situations, thus exploring form and content in the manner of a caricaturist.

Chadwick Rantanen's sculptures seem to be a diversion of themselves, presenting sculptures were custom made battery adapters with insect wings added on, or simply a giant battery operated bird, bringing an aesthetic attention to a part of the object that is usually unseen.

Humor is always in the eye of the beholder.

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