



ACGN

GIANT STEPS
SEXTON
SABRA VALLEY, AUSTRALIA

DANI MARTI CLOSER

Preview

5.30 – 7.30pm Tuesday 8 May 2007

Exhibition Dates

8 May – 2 June 2007

ARC
one gallery

45 Flinders Lane
Melbourne VIC 3000

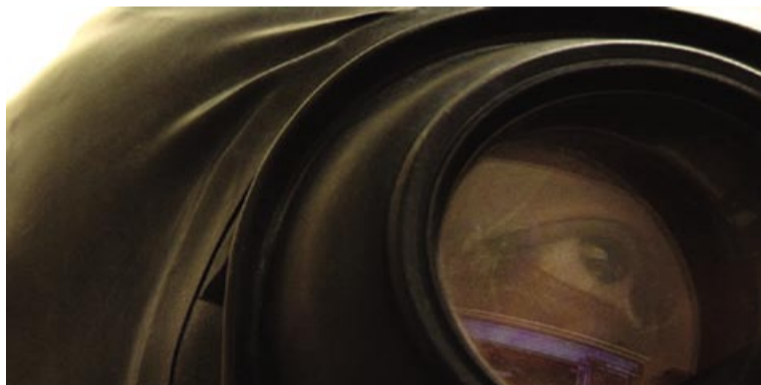
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1 *The Pleasure Chest (detail)*, 2007
Second hand beaded necklaces and Spanish rosary beads collected between 2000 and 2003
Tubular mesh used for mussel farming on wood
255 x 130cm

2 *Still from The Stamp Collector*, 2006
HDV tape on DVD, 6'40"

reverse
Monster, 2007
Second hand beaded necklaces and Spanish rosary beads collected between 2000 and 2003
Tubular mesh used for mussel farming on wood
66 x 66cm



2

Emotional Minimalism

Marti is Spanish, and this can be seen in the sense of spirituality of his native land and the strong sensuality he evokes. At the same time though, he represents a stateless nature: born in Spain, studying in the United States, living for a long time in Australia and finally moving to Glasgow, Scotland. This makes him the right person to represent a globalised and neo-baroque society, full of syncretism and contradiction; a society in which people seek dystopias of illusion and excess because they perceive harmony and happiness as no more than a mirage.

One of the most evident characteristics of Dani Marti's work, instantly perceivable by critics and by the general public, is the illuminating mixture of a 'cold' medium and an ardent content. On the one hand we have the choice of an abstract language based on simple geometries which are repeated in a modular manner; on the other there is the will to concentrate on a figurative genre, the portrait, particularly on the psychological introspection and on that high degree of intimacy between artist and subject (but also between subject and spectator) that it entails.

The technique chosen implies a repetitive and patient labour, a concentration on the rule that governs the weaving of the cords that does not allow any emotions or distractions; and then there is the ability of

communication, bound to the sensuality of the materials used and the emotional force of the colour. Marti glances at minimalism and all the abstract-geometric tradition of the twentieth century in his forms – in the way he uses space, in the choice of lowly and industrial materials, in the patient warping of the surfaces. However he manages to express a rather baroque style in the way in which he makes these forms become opulent, luxuriant and communicative.

The most pertinent comparison to Dani Marti could be that of Felix Gonzales Torres, to whom Marti dedicated a passionate homage in the exhibition "Looking for Felix" (Firstdraft Gallery, Sydney, 2000).

Like Marti, Gonzales-Torres overheats his forms and minimalist and conceptual languages using everyday objects and industrial materials to relate about himself, loss, love, death and other experiences. To all this Dani Marti adds the pious exercise of a craftsman, the study of language of which he learnt all its subtleties in time. This skill is the starting point from which to enter, finally, into his work.

The artist seeks an intimate relation with his work and, in turn, the work seems to invite the spectator to do the same.

Extracts from *Closer* by Domenico Quaranta, published in *Dani Marti: Dark Bones*, exhibition catalogue, Brescia, Italy, October 2006

Video Works

Marti's recent video works (his first in this medium) deal with the same obsession as the woven pieces: portraiture. While *The Stamp Collector* (2006) delivers a more abstract and formal approach – we hardly see the person, and when we do so it is under the 'second skin' of a mask and a rubber suit – *The Evils of Forgetfulness* (2006) provides us with a greater sense of the persona, Robert. However, faced with the camera, the character soon slips into a succession of spontaneous performances turning the whole idea of making a portrait into a contractio in terminis.

For Marti, both weaving and (video) taping represent an act of bondage, a ritual that enables the artist to 'possess' the person that is portrayed. Aesthetics, pleasure, fantasy and security come into play reminding us of Foucault's ideas about violence as an exercise of power that negatively affects freedom and through which the dignity of the other is perceived under a new light. It is a question of faith, of mutual consensus, but also, and most importantly, about portraiture as an impossible act.

In his work Dani Marti exposes the torture of our spirits and our desire for emancipation, in a visceral and suffocating way. It is as though the artist wants to remind us that heaven and hell are inside ourselves.

Extract from *Heaven and Hell*, Paco Barragan on Dani Marti, *Contemporary Art Magazine*, Vol 86, 2006

Paco Barragan is an independent curator based in Madrid and the Artistic Director of the Castellon County Council International Painting Prize.

BIOGRAPHY

1963 Born Barcelona, Spain
1978–79 Ramon Gomis, studies in tapestry technique, Barcelona, Spain
1982–88 MBA, Escade, Barcelona, Spain
1990–91 Diploma Fine Arts, Julian Ashton Art School, Sydney
1991–92 Fine Arts Course, Art Students League, New York
2000 Master of Arts, majoring in sculpture and installation, College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney
2006 Master of Fine Arts, Glasgow School of Art
Currently lives and works in Glasgow and Sydney

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2007 *Closer*, Arc One Gallery, Melbourne
Braveheart, The Studio, Glasgow Festival, Glasgow
Off my noodle, Live Sites, Newcastle Region Art Gallery and Newcastle City Council, NSW
2006 *Dark Bones*, Citric Gallery, Brescia, Italy
The Seven Pleasures of Snow White, Sherman Galleries, Sydney
2005 *There is nothing at the end of the rainbow*, Arc One Gallery, Melbourne
Variations in a Serious Black Dress, Viewing Gallery, Sherman Galleries, Sydney
Orifices 2000–2004 and *Looking for Felix 2000*, Newcastle Region Art Gallery, NSW
2004–05 *Variations in a Serious Black Dress*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Canberra, travelling to Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney; Port Macquarie Hastings Regional Gallery, NSW; Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, NSW; Albury Regional Art Gallery, NSW; La Trobe Regional Gallery, VIC; Monash University Art Museum, VIC
2004 *Looking for Rover*, Sherman Galleries, Sydney
Orifices 2000–04, The Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, Singapore
2003 *Variations in a Serious Black Dress*, Room 35, Gitte Weise Gallery, Sydney
Portrait of a young man returning a ladybird to the grass, Arc One Gallery, Melbourne
2002 *Blue angels*, Galeria Alejandro Sales, Barcelona
Mother is crying, Briefcase Project and Block, Sydney
2001 *You make me feel like love, peace and happiness*, Gallery 4A, Sydney
I am forever blowing bubbles, Room 35, Gitte Weise Gallery, Sydney
missing spain, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Sydney
Enhance Systems and Orifices, Span Galleries, Melbourne
Jamón, La Capella, Barcelona
2000 *Thin Wall PB-I*, Artspace, Sydney
Coco, Rubyayre Gallery, Sydney
Sorry I just dropped my guts, The Lounge, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Sydney
Looking for felix, Firstdraft Gallery, Sydney
1999 *WS-S#*, Room 35, Gitte Weise Gallery, Sydney
1998 *Warren de Maria* Gallery, Sydney

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2007 Cornice Art Fair, Venice
He dominates all, Black Box, Puerto Rico
2006-07 *Strange Cargo: Contemporary Art as a State of Encounter*, Newcastle Region Art Gallery, Newcastle, New South Wales, touring regional galleries in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland
2006 *Tomorrow Now*, Fondazione Bevilacqua Lamasa, Venice
The Projection Room, coinciding with the Liverpool Biennale, Liverpool
A man's world, Museum of Brisbane, Brisbane
Love Video 2006, Gallery Sad- Artunion-, Moscow
VAD Festival Internacional de Video i Arts Digitals, Girona
londromo Film Competition, M+B studio, Venice
Goods to Declare: MFA International, Bezalel Art School, Tel Aviv
Celeste Art Prize, Goldsmiths University of London, The Old Truman Brewery, London
Marks and Comments, MFA degree show, Tramway, Glasgow and MoCa, Roskilde, Denmark
Gridlines, Newcastle Region Art Gallery, Newcastle, New South Wales
II Premio Internacional de Pintura de Castellón, Fundacion Astroc, Madrid
SCREAM Sounding Images, in collaboration with Diana Simpson, CalArts, Los Angeles
2005 *POST*, Residence Gallery, London and Castlefield Gallery, Manchester
II Premio Internacional de Pintura de Castellón, Espai, Castellon
Glad-Wrap-Up, Sherman Galleries, Sydney
VAD Festival Internacional de Video i Arts Digitals, Girona
Academy Now!, sound collaborations with Diana Simpson and Vivian Barty-Taylor, Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Glasgow
Good and Gruesome, CCA Student Lab Night, Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow
Aratura Craft Exchange, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin
New Town Pasadena, in collaboration with Diana Simpson, Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, CA
Nuit Blanche, Paris
2004 *One Of: Festivus 04*, Sherman Galleries, Sydney
Pistils! Petals, Fundacio Espais Contemporanis, Girona
2003 *Festivus*, Sherman Galleries, Sydney
Summer Show, Arc One Gallery, Melbourne
25 years of Mardi Gras, Tin Sheds Gallery, Sydney
Home Sweet Home: Works from the Peter Fay Collection, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
The Canberra Contemporary Art Space and The Art Store Art Award 2003, CCAS, Canberra
2002 *Festivus*, Sherman Galleries, Sydney
Summer Show, Arc One at Span, Melbourne
Opening Show, Arc One at Span, Melbourne
Ruin, Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award, Melbourne
Dressing and Dreaming, Sherman Galleries Hargrave, Sydney
Archive of Dud Slides, Briefcase, Sydney
2001 *Artful Park 2001*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
Ix1, Boutwell Draper Gallery, Sydney
Blue angels, Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award, Melbourne
Interiors, Object Gallery, Sydney
Plastic by nature, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Canberra
Ante, Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras Festival, Imperial Stacks Gallery, Sydney
2000 *Twothousand&89*, Exhibition and Performance Space, College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney
Not quite right, Grey Matter Contemporary Art, Sydney
To exist (24), blue funghi, Grey Matter Contemporary Art, Sydney
1999 *Three of a Kind*, Gallery 19, Sydney
1998 *Aula de Lletres*, Barcelona, Spain
1997 *What is love?*, Toast II Gallery, Sydney
Fund-raising exhibition for the AIDS Trust of Australia
Love, No te nom Gallery, Barcelona, Spain

GRANTS AND AWARDS

2007 Newcastle Regional Gallery Residency, Newcastle
1999 Australia Council for the Arts, New Work Grant

COMMISSIONS

Woven Constructions
2007 Ed Filipowski-Mark Lee, *Flash*, New York
2006 Nunez Martin Collection, *Infanta Margarita* (European Monarchs), Canary Islands, Spain
2005 Alexander Tzannes Associates, *European Monarchs (Silver and Gold)*, Sydney
Wardle + Hassel, and Lend Lease, *Under the Crescent Moon*, Melbourne
2004 George Freedman & Associates, *Philipa and Catherine* (European Monarchs series), AMP Circular Quay, Sydney
Burley Katon Holliday Architects, Sydney, *The Last Sins of St Francis: Scaring the Flesh (last episode)*
Fast Lane, Sans Torquay, Melbourne
2003 BatesSmart, *Different Trains*, Melbourne Crown Casino, Melbourne
2002 Linda Gregoriou, art collector, *Linda Pink Scapes*, Sydney
2001 University of Wollongong, New South Wales, *Lorca*
Murray Thomas, Architect, *OBS 4*, Sydney; Ian Halliday, Architect, *Linda and WS-S*, Sydney; Dale Jones Evans, Architect, *Australian Landscape – Yellow*
1999 Burley Katon Halliday Architects, *OBS 1*, Sydney; Dale Jones Evans, Architect, *OBS#3*, Sydney

Architect Collaborations

2006 *Under the Crescent Moon*, Wardle + Hassel and Lend Lease, Melbourne
2002–03 Docklands/Mirvac, Melbourne, conceptualisation and design of wind-wall installations, with Dale Jones Evans

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Chartwell Collection, Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand
University of Wollongong, New South Wales
Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales
Art Bank, Sydney