

PENNACCHIO ARGENTATO

27 April to 22 July 2012, Upper Gallery

Wilkinson Gallery is pleased to present its first solo exhibition with the Italian duo Pennacchio Argentato.

For this exhibition the collaborative pair position their sculptures as free standing agents, hanging off the wall and suspended from the ceiling. Integrating photography and video into their sculptural repertoire, the works act as catalysts that simultaneously reflect and challenge one another. As if overcome by a crisis of aesthetic register, a stylistic battle takes place between the artworks' broad formal references, ranging from minimalist tendencies and optical illusion, to gothic font text paired with "new age" video.

Cast in acrylic resin from the front glass of a car, the artists characterize the four shield-like sculptures *Shield#0- #00001* as troops deployed in a row, prepared for battle. The 3-D stripe pattern alludes to the interplay of absence and presence, while the flames suggest the collective experience of crisis of current times as a result of the global economy. According to the artists' self-devised system, all matter, including the artists' themselves, are convertible entities; this conversion is likewise reflected in our daily lives, whether it be in terms of converting file formats or currency.

FAQ operates as a sculpture illuminated by a video projection of mathematical fractals abstracted into an array of shifting lights, colors and forms. Acting as a visual anchor, it only but alludes to the presence of answers, instead manifesting as a form of light amusement or distraction. In formal contrast, sculptures such as *Long Bones*, placed at the entrance to the gallery, as well as *West End*, a ladder sculpture suspended from the ceiling, adopt a more tectonic composition. While *West End* behaves as a kind of latent object, both works physically invite the visitor to position him or herself within the gallery environment.

The incandescent photographic flames that optically engulf the freestanding sculpture, *Set in the same universe* function as the fuel that formally unites the subsequent artworks in the exhibition. Taken from a larger image of civil riots found in recent news, the sculpture acts as a centripetal force within the exhibition by introducing an element of reality into the fictional discourse and diversity of styles that are otherwise present in the gallery. In the end it is this interrelationship of contrasting styles, and the tension created by their potential to converge, that activate the exhibition as a whole.

Marisa Argentato was born Naples, Italy, 1977 & Pasquale Pennacchio was born Caserta, Italy, 1979. After their studies at the Academy of Fine Arts, Naples, they attended the Staatliche Hochschule fur Bildende Kunste, Stadelshule, Frankfurt am Main. Solo: 'SOUL & CO.', (with Matthew Gregory) Sandy Brown, Berlin (2011); 'Amikejo', Museo di Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León (MUSAC), León (2011); 'Five o'clock shadows', T293, Rome (2010); 'The New Boring', Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis (2010).

Group: 'TWIN TAILS', Bischoff projects, Frankfurt am Main, (2012); 'Where language stops', Wilkinson Gallery, London (2011); 'On the metaphor of growth', Kunsthau Baselland, Basel (2011); 'SI – Syndrome Italiana', Le Magasin, Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, Grenoble (2010); 'Dude, where's my Career?', MMK Zollamt / Portikus, Frankfurt am Main (2009).