

Kim Seob Boninsegni
Entre Chien et Loups
7.4 - 21.5.2016

At the end of the day, just before night, our fears and nightmares resurface. The concerns brought up by that familiar yet incongruous time of the day, seem to be represented across the works presented by Kim Seob Boninsegni for this new exhibition. The artist, who has been – for quite a long time now– multiplying the ways of creating new complex narrative spaces, using alternately video, movie, drawing and writing, hollows out Truth and Consequences exposing space by diffusing a troubling fog.

On the gallery's floor, dark bags containing framed drawings –looking like they were just left there by their owners- are disposed on other drawings. The frames are covered with a grey fur. The drawings were realised with black and white ink. And the patterns appear as playful and pop. The whole comes out as having the same attractive yet gloomy texture of abandoned cuddly toys. However, each of these pieces constitutes an unsettling and chilly ensemble. The bags, inspired by technical clothes, are placed on the birth chart of a school killing perpetuated by teenagers. Like small figurines put on pagan altars, these pieces seem to be filled with an obscure energy. Entitled Kiviak studies, this series calls back to an Inuit traditional practice which consists in stuffing sealskin with auks and let it ferment in order to provide high protein food supply throughout the year, irrespective of animal migrations.

In the neighbouring window display, a Chinese lantern –made out of drawings and adorned with bullet holes– enlightens a book, to which the artist's short story was added, and a backpack designed by PSLC (Ludovic Bourilly design). On the pavement, a powerful German car is parked. A tune escapes from its tinted windows; the lyrics are stuttered in an approximate Korean. Yet again, the atmosphere is as intimate and naive as it is heavy. There is every reason to believe that this set will eventually open on a dark and violent scene.

In addition to Kim Seob Boninsegni's work, there is a mural, white on white painting made by Aymeric Tarrade and two photographic propositions by Yvan Alvarez that illustrate a stabbing boredom and a disturbing similarity.

Kim Seob Boninsegni brings us beneath the surface of human relations, beneath the vast and intriguing network of contacts that builds our relation to the world and that was made visible and readable through some new smartphone applications. The artist never stops warning us that nothing is free in this society as in anywhere else: groups are made, dissolved, codified, they resist, live but

their framework is imposed by globalising tools, commercially structured and not at all marginal.

Nevertheless, for the artist, as for other creators, the margin remains the metaphoric place where the tensions of our time are revealed. By immersing himself, but nonetheless keeping some kind of distance, Kim Seob Boninsegni juggles with the codes he has been observing from the under-world in which he claims to have withdrawn. He opposes immediacy to a longer time that is necessary in order to write, think, create, draw and structure a narrative. He gives himself the right to use fiction with the purpose of better seizing reality. He therefore produces works that explore the paradox of two-way mirrors.

Despite having written this new chapter with distance and humour, we cannot be reassured at all. Claiming an economy in which drawing would merely be a means of exchange and an abstract space, the artist puts the addressees of his practice in connection by assigning to each a role in this vast yet so closed network. But the light breaks through the fractures which keep on cracking. What we hate becomes tolerable; our liberties become blunted in morality; our relationships vanish in the global. Kim Seob Boninsegni reminds us that to identify yourself as an artist offers the possibility of dreaming about a self-controlled temporality, visibility and strength even if this position is precarious and fragile.

While I am writing these lines, my girlfriend is calling to tell me a hostage taking is happening in a supermarket only a few meters away from home. Stuck in a high-speed train, I cannot help but think that even though Kim Seob Boninsegni knows how to create extremely rough situations, reality is denser than he could ever dare imagine.

Samuel Gross

Translated by Nadia Inacio