

Marlene McCarty & Rasmus Myrup
Can I Borrow Your Hole
Opening: 11.09.20 from 17:00
11.09.20 – 14.11.20

Plata o plombo?
By Adam Jasper

You're holding the roomsheet in your hands right now. That's what you are reading, a piece of A4 paper made just for you, to orient you in an exhibition. But this is also here to distance you from it. Perhaps you are early, or your date is late. You can inform yourself with this page, or you can fend off the awkward half-engaged glances of other visitors. Perhaps you know them, but you can't remember where you last met them. Or you've forgotten their names, and need to buy a little time. This sheet is for you.

It is also for you if you need to orient yourself in the exhibition. If you wish to find a way amongst the works. The room sheet is for you, no more and no less than if you are at the opening to see friends. This single sheet, which weighs about 5 grams, ink included, will judge you no more nor less. The artworks, on the other hand, are a different story.

The work that you see on the right of the entrance is a silver point by Rasmus Myrup, on heavy stock. There is a female neanderthal, triumphant, urinating, her position, in the language of heraldry (which runs like a secret thread through this show), would be *dexter rampant*. There is a yellow cast to the background. Is it a new dawn or a sunset? Rasmus' works are heavy with ambiguities. They displace us into an imagined human prehistory, one that slips the knot of the caveman family image of prehistory, the Flintstones-as-nuclear-family in their suburban cave. It's difficult to remember that the Flintstones were themselves *progressives* once, an attempt to present troglodytes, the ultimate *other*, as not just out to club you and drag you back to the cave, but *just like us*. Except that then, we were the ones who changed.

Note the switch from silverpoint to pierre noire and sanguine in Rasmus' series along the wall now behind you. The lovingly studied musculature could almost be a *disegno*, a preparation for a Renaissance painting. But these are no academic studies of idealised beauty, of the harmony of sensuality and morality before the fall. Look at the careful rendering of the hair, the fur, afforded as much attention as the flesh. Pierre noire and hair: all that is left of the animal after a hunt. This is about the irreconcilable strangeness of our own appetites. We are all cavemen, right now. In our caves, with our flickering memes. That's why you are reading this roomsheet. Because the other people in the cave are making you nervous.

If Rasmus is communicating with us via a distant past, Marlene McCarty is a visitor from a potential future. She uses drawing as a tool for meditative, speculative thinking like few other

artists. Her drawings show a future that has mutated, swapped genes, and reincorporated the ruins of the past out of an implacable will to go on. *Wilding Vibe (cicuta maculata)*, for example, perhaps shows an abstract work, but it has become a trellis to a weed, spotted water hemlock, that is very fond of water and very poisonous to humans. A member of the carrot family, it was known as "suicide root" to the Iroquois.

The image could be read as a sign on a pauper's grave. But it is impossible to see this garden as wholly negative. It is rather a pharmakon, a series of signs that can either mean "poison", or "remedy" depending on the dosage, and depending on your perspective. These mounds are either unmarked graves, or they rather hold signs from a peaceful protest, a *vigil*, in which the works stand witness to, or watch over, you and your future. Your mind is wandering. This room text is too long. But it is important not only to be Rampant, Dexter, it's also important to be Regardant, to that which is Sinister.

And all this definitely is. Take the central work, with the title, both dry and uninformative *GROUP 3 (Tanjung Putting, Borneo, 1971)*, 2007. The story is wonderful. An anthropologist in Borneo, who became a surrogate mother to a young primate, to the jealous dismay of her *Homo Sapiens* mate. But what we see goes beyond the overt story, to become an allegory. What we see is a kind of Queen, with her Orang-Utan consorts, Guardant, left and right, with sceptres of authority in her hands, and her offspring at her breast. Imperial ornamentation, even in the Victorian era, was not simply about *order*, it was about creating a system that could embrace disorder, that could implicitly incorporate that which it came into contact with. It is a lesson from the dawn of capitalism that we have forgotten: their future feeds off the destruction of your present.

Plata o plombo? Silver or lead? You take the hint, or you take the bullet. Either way it is coming, this omnivorous future full of novelties, full of horrors, with all the vitality and excess that a planetary system can throw at us. Becoming a vegan may be morally correct. Refusing to reproduce may be ethical. Your rectitude won't save you from being eaten, but all the same, you now have to choose sides.