

liquid art

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Exhibition with Jura Shust & Matthias Yzebaert
from November 14th to December 19th, 2015 at *Plagiarama*

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du 14 Novembre au 19 Décembre 2015 à *Plagiarama*

Edited by **PLAGIARAMA**

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ENG/

Liquid Modernity is a concept developed by the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman to describe the weakness of human links in our post-modern society which is all about pleasure, consumption and individual freedom. "Liquid" society is contrasting with an older age, the modern "solid" society, where rules, roles and structures weren't that easy to break. With its current exhibition, Plagiarama is shifting the debate to the artistic playground : did Art become "liquid" too or does it just reflect the "liquid" culture ?

Matthias Yzebaert believes that there isn't any distinct hierarchy between objects in the material world ; It's only the context that shapes elements of reality. For the "Liquid art" exhibition, he focuses on one of the strongest taboos in contemporary art : the idea of decoration. He presents commodity goods (as he says), as a pure decorative and non conceptual work of art, produced with as little involvement as possible, industrially printed, reproducible, fashionable, temporary.

Jura Shust explores the duality of an entertainment culture looking for moral safety. He is pointing to the permanent contradiction of a society searching for secure relationships while avoiding long term engagements to provide individual freedom. His works presented in Plagiarama are questioning this paradox, staging different ways to escape moral and social limits whilst still being part of the social framework.

In their own way, Matthias Yzebaert and Jura Shust are responding to Bauman's analysis about the need for consumption and entertainment turnover driven by a fashionable and short-lived - therefore transitory - social identity.

Curator Yuna Mathieu-Chovet

FR/

La modernité liquide est un concept développé par le sociologue Zygmunt Bauman pour décrire la faiblesse des liens humains au sein de notre société postmoderne construite autour des valeurs de plaisir, de consommation et de liberté individuelle. La société contemporaine «liquide» se différencie de la société moderne «solide» où les règles, les rôles et les structures n'étaient pas si faciles à défaire. À travers cette exposition, Plagiarama déplace le débat sur le terrain de l'art : l'Art est-il devenu «liquide» lui aussi, ou bien reflète-il simplement cette culture «liquide» ?

Matthias Yzebaert estime qu'il n'y a pas de hiérarchie distincte entre les objets du monde matériel ; c'est seulement le contexte qui forme les éléments de la réalité. Pour l'exposition «Liquid art», il se concentre sur l'un des plus puissants tabous de l'art contemporain : l'idée de décoration. Il présente, comme il les nomme, des «produits de consommation courante», soit un corpus d'oeuvres purement décoratives et non conceptuelles, produites avec aussi peu d'engagement personnel que possible, imprimées de façon industrielle, reproductibles, à la mode, temporaires.

Jura Shust explore la dualité d'une culture du divertissement à la recherche d'une sécurité morale. Il souligne la permanente contradiction d'une société d'individus en quête de relations sûres tout en évitant les engagements à long terme afin d'assurer leur liberté individuelle. Son travail présenté à Plagiarama interroge ce paradoxe, mettant en scène différents moyens pour échapper aux limites sociales et morales tout en continuant à faire partie du cadre social.

Chacun à leur manière, Matthias Yzebaert et Jura Shust répondent à l'analyse de Bauman quant au besoin de consommation et de divertissement frénétique et constamment renouvelé, entraîné par une identité sociale soumise aux tendances, éphémère et donc transitoire.

Commissariat Yuna Mathieu-Chovet

Jura Shust



Spirit Intoxication, 2015

Jura Shust

Construction ladder, Belgian Bluestone, Wine glasses, Detergent, Steel chain, Wheels

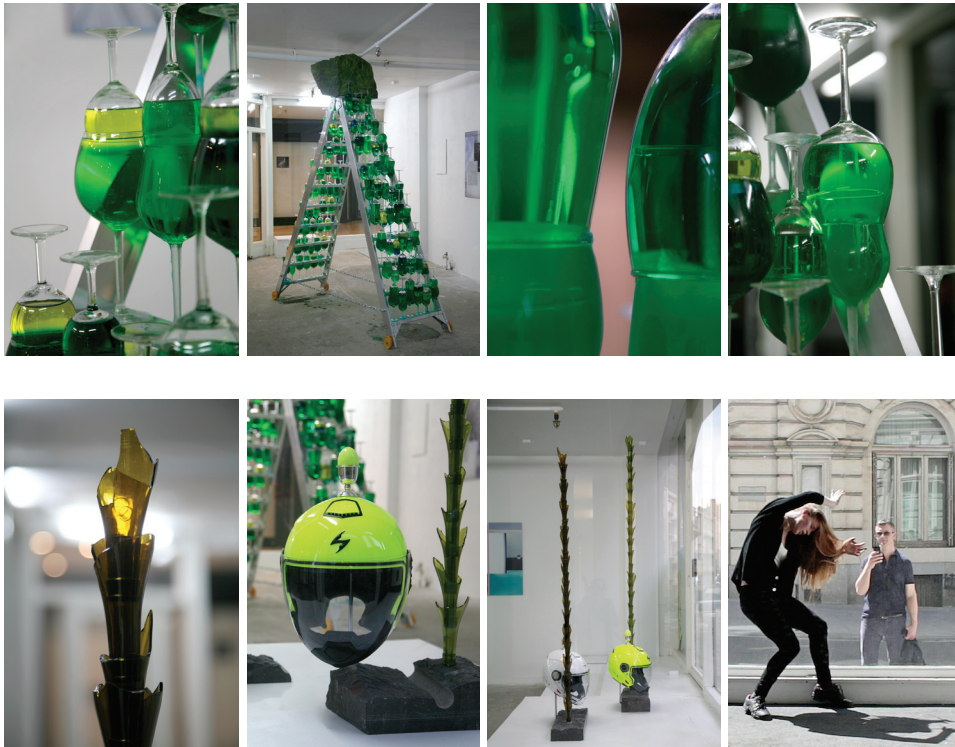
300 x 250 x 70 cm

The concept of purification, or the ritual cleansing of persons and objects, is found across cultures and religions. It is present in urban and rural settings, in sectarian and secularized societies, and in tribal and multiethnic communities. It has been a sociological feature of human existence from antiquity to modernity, one with an array of behavioral guidelines and consequences.

Sunday morning, streams of detergent mixed with alcohol, sweat, vomit and urine left sooty caves, clubs and bars that still keep dying embers. Coming out from the black holes, the streams uniting into small rivers, running down the pavement, looking for a drain, licking Belgian Bluestone. The stone which still remembers the prehistoric scream, the wish to touch the flame of the sun, the aspiration to break daily order. Unconscious desire to avoid the torture of repetition. The passion to acquire speed of light and reach the sacral point where the blood of Christ meets the blood of Dionysus.

Purification doesn't exist without pollution. Purity is linked to sanctity, devotion, safety and pollution is associated with irreligion, and danger. Alcohol, the tool which for a long time serves the function of ritualistic intoxication absorbing the biggest part of the world. Literally included in our DNA structure, alcohol addiction follows us since thousands of years. Legalized and controlled by higher forces, the spirit of alcohol allows us to escape moral codes and social limits, to meet chaos, and to decrease the tension in our body. As a way to fight rationalism and discipline, intoxication formats our brain, grants us oblivion and inspiring us for the future.

Jura Shust, November 9th, 2015.



Exo Oblivion #2, 2015

Jura Shust

*Belgian Bluestone, metal Eggcup, Egg, Broken Wine bottles, Yellow «Scorpion» Helmet
40 x 200 cm, 30 cm depth*

Exo Oblivion #3, 2015

Jura Shust

*Belgian Bluestone, metal Eggcup, Egg, Broken Beer bottles, White «Scorpion» Helmet
50 x 165 cm, 30 cm depth*

While our prostheses touch Martian soil, split up protons in a giant accelerator, data is blooming up by incredible flowers. Science as if a new religion, lights up our way to immortality. We reproduce and redesign ourselves, structure our surrounding, subduing to our logic everything, over and over we are looking for the way to escape.

Thirsty for resistance, hungry for destruction, obsessed with oblivion. Speed as an anthem of the newest time inspires and intoxicates us, involving us into an insane dance of galaxy vortex, while gravity catches us in its arms, turning us into fossil ammonites.

Decoding a «digital man» in an archaeological manner, capturing prehistoric motives in his everydayness, questioning the nature of dominance, *Exo Oblivion* experiences aggression of the modern world through its aspiration for a mythical comfort.

Jura Shust, November 9th, 2015.

Mutual Love, 2014-2015

Jura Shust

*16:9, HD 1920 x 1080, MPEG-4
12:28 min. (loop)*

The film is produced in collaboration with the performer Irina Lavrinovic

J.S.: There is the church with the huge bell behind the wall of this house, does it disturb you?

I.L.: No, not at all, I rather like it, when I hear the bell in the morning I know it's time to wake up, I don't need even an alarm, I really like to hear it and continue to sleep... This sound exalts me, really, as if I'm the princess of the abandoned house...

J.S.: Do you feel A certain energy of this place?

I.L.: I feel nothing bad here, there are the rumors that under the house there is a tunnel which links the house to the church and the royal palace, people say that in this house King's lovers were staying, I think that no one was living here but mostly staying...

J.S.: Are you afraid by time?

I.L.: Yes I'm, I have some fear, I'm not afraid to die, no fear of death, no... I'm afraid to waist my life time, afraid to wakeup tomorrow and realize that I'm 60 years old... It's scary to realize that I was born to learn something and then to die, I think it's so meaningless. I could not be born then.

J.S.: How do you see your future?

I.L.: mmm, I feel that time somehow flows, and I have no idea how to capture it.

J.S.: Do you believe in destiny?

I.L.: Yes, I believe, it's like a miracle, I believe in magic, when something is happening and you know that it has to happen. The most important decisions in my life I do by listening to my heart.

J.S.: How you would describe the state of trance?

I.L.: It's as if you are walking on your toes, and don't touch the ground. I was in a similar state when I was suffering from anorexia, I was so far, I didn't want to see anyone, didn't want to answer any questions, I was alone with my books and my hunger. I didn't feel my body and I enjoyed it... But I am not trying to say that I'm somewhere where you never find me, where you don't understand me, you know...

J.S.: What will happen if you stop to dance?

I.L.: I will die I guess, once in school I wrote the article about the suicides of 21century. Suicides which continue to survive but they are not living how they want, they don't kill their body but they kill their soul. The same will happen to me, I would be simply unhappy.

J.S.: Does the world in mutual love with you?

I.L.: I don't know, I would love to be in... Actually I simply want to be happy, I want to say before I die that I lived my life happily, this is the best answer for me.

From the conversation with Jura Shust and Irina Lavrinovic, Brussels, 2014.

Jura Shust was born in Belarus, 1983. Being a leader of the conceptual audio-visual group *IOD*, he studied Media and Visual Communication at *EHU* (Vilnius, LT). Focused on political engaged art, he was involved in international projects as «Opening the Door?» *CAC* (Vilnius, LT) and «Europe n» *GFZK* (Leipzig, DE). In 2013 Shust obtained MA in Fine Arts at *KASK* (Ghent, BE). A year later he had a solo show at *Ÿ gallery* (Minsk, BY), and the group show «Coming People» at *S.M.A.K.* (Ghent, BE). In October 2015 Shust had his first Belgium solo exhibition at *Bruthaus Gallery* (Waregem, BE). Currently Jura Shust attends *HISK* (Ghent, BE) residency program.

Matthias Yzebaert is born in 1983, living in Ghent, Belgium. He graduated from the Luca School of Arts in Ghent as a graphic & publicity designer in 2007 and attained a master's degree in Mixed Media from the same school in 2013. Today his artistic practice consists of autonomous work in which he employs a wide range of media (installations, photography, painting, electronic music). Recurring themes include aesthetics, presentation, appropriation and nothingness. In addition to his artistic practice and his work as a graphic designer, he is the founder and manager of the Ghent art space *These Things Take Time*.

Matthias Yzebaert



Digital Collage, 2015

Matthias Yzebaert

5 designs on dibond print

60 x 90 cm each

Unlimited Edition

'I want to make pretty things.'

In this series, I catalogue my own photographic images (societyofcopy.tumblr.com) digitally to create a non-hierarchical flow. An accumulation of planes, the 'composition' arises naturally out of this process, without the application of any criteria or filters on my part. The motive behind this work is simply the desire to generate aesthetically stimulating images.

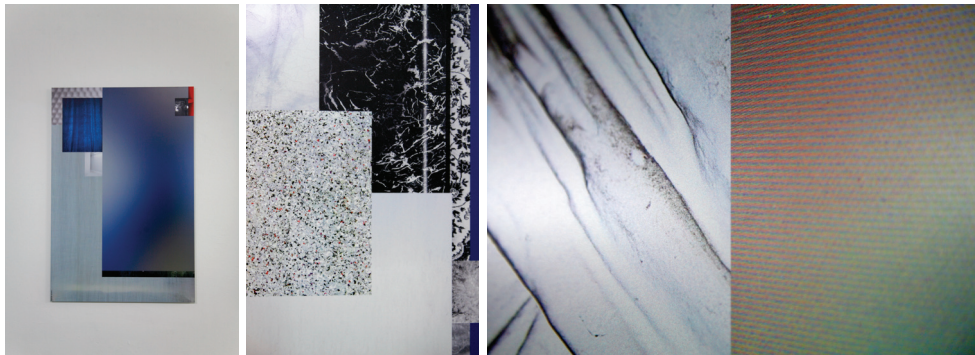
'I want to make things that bear as little potential meaning as possible.'

My intention 'to make something without meaning' is impossible. To want to produce non-conceptual work is in itself a conceptual intention. And yet I seek out the possibility of creating a hollow work because this emptiness and meaninglessness speaks to me. Born of this intention, this Digital Collage brings together art, decoration and design in the art space.

'Authenticity and sincerity have no value or meaning in postmodernity.'

(Susan Klinke, *Teach Yourself Postmodernism*)

I seek to make decorative work as a reaction to my reflex to work conceptually. In my view, there are two opposing forces in visual art : the conceptual and the decorative. The conceptual is honored in the visual arts, while the decorative is viewed with disdain. Furthermore, both oppose one another in terms of their use of materials. Conceptual art uses a minimum of materials, while decorative work exists purely in its material form. Conceptual art is meant to stimulate thought, which makes it by default a consumer product for the mind. Decorative art, on the other hand, is meant to be conceptually void, thus making it the ideal aesthetic consumer product for the masses.



'Serving to make something look more attractive'
(Definition of 'Ornament', *Oxford University Dictionary*)

I use design to reconcile the conceptual discourse with the decorative. Design as the manifestation of technical perfection, mass production, economy and functionality. These four aspects represent the current focus of our desires.

'The fashion of today is the cliché of tomorrow.'

Decoration is characterized by its lack of substance, its following of the current hypes and trends. This characteristic points to a paradox in contemporary art, which today, despite its conceptual ambitions, also deals in the currency of hype. As such, the decorative approach is the perfect method for taking a clean sample of the zeitgeist. The supposed meaninglessness of the decorative is thus disproved. It truly does have a function; decorative forms can serve as mirrors, artefacts and models of our time.

'We don't have anything to prove except that we're enjoying life.' Jura Shust

Having written this text, I have clearly failed in my intention to 'make a work without meaning'. In the end, this statement is simply an excuse to make '(pretty) things'. This subversive reflex seems to be the common thread in my work. So forget what you've read and enjoy the pretty pictures. Thanks.

Matthias Yzebaert, November 9th, 2015
(Translated by Jonathan Beaton).

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