

DILMOS

milano

SALONE DEL MOBILE 2003

EXHIBITION OF THE COLLECTION "OXIDIZED" BY STUDIO JOB.

"a new collection of oxidized bronze objects that are Incorporated on French oak tables and cupboards.

Complementary there are new oxidized bronze objects (weapons and symbols) which will be available in edition."

THIS WILL BE A TRAVELLING EXHIBITION THAT CONTINUES TO GRONINGER MUSEUM (HOLLAND) MAY 17 SEPT. 21, 2003.

MARK P. WILSON, GRONINGER MUSEUM, IS THE CURATOR OF BOTH EXHIBITIONS. FOR THE OCCASION SUE AN VAN DER ZIJPP, CURATOR CONTEMPORARY ART GRONINGER MUSEUM, WROTE THE TEXT "BRAVE NEW WORK" WHICH IS ENCLOSED.

"OXIDIZED" at DILMOS

open : 2003, APRIL 10 -14, 10 AM - 9 PM

OPENING : COCKTAL, WEDNESDAY APRIL 9, 6 PM

location : dilmos, piazza san marco 1, milano

studio jOB

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"Brave New Work

Like a good story teller who's only getting started, Studio Job (Job Smeets and Nynke Tynagel) each season adds a new chapter to its increasingly grim tale that initially sounded humorous due to its typical framework.

Studio Job's infectious, caricatural designs that are devoid of scale have caused considerable uproar lately in the international world of design. Their works of art provide a commentary on usual interpretations about functionality, mass production and style by purposely playing with characteristics such as unity, autonomy and figuration in their designs. Smeets and Tynagel's new works of art are enveloped in an atmosphere in which danger, aggression, confusion and fear rule.

With this new installation the artists have intensified and vehemently turned their backs on style and purpose, as opposed to last year's installation that exuded a tragicomic atmosphere replete with melancholy and restlessness.

Instead they show the visitor a fairytale-like installation of bronze objects that have turned green and, moreover, are decked out with a sometimes caricatural, over-the-top ornamentation.

Central to this installation is a medieval-like castle perched on top of a rock formation. The castle, which is also a candlestick holder, is surrounded by a number of objects such as a securely locked treasure-chest, a large axe and a broken-down classic clock with attached to it a sword, turning said clock as it were into "Excalibur"; a bust of a male decked out in a flashy uniform and ornate dictator-style cap that appears to be hollow inside and could therefore serve as a vase; and a fake 19th century decorated goblet with a deer on top that is being cornered by reptiles.

The hero of last year's presentation is back as well: "The Candle Man". This figure appeared back then as a life-sized wall figure holding two candles in his hand.

It was not clear whether the Candle Man was an instigator or rather was bringing the light to the people. This time, however, he appears in the form of a baby without candles. Smeets and Tynagel now leave no doubt regarding the true nature of this creature. The Candle Man, adorned with devil's horns, is, thank God, firmly ensconced or mummified and lies safely riveted to a bullet.

To the visitor this installation seems to be a cacophonous world full of contradictions. It is a collection in which clues to several style periods, personal symbolism, various story motifs and a mixture of autonomous and functional objects tumble, thereby making it difficult to hide the broken-down decorum of times gone by, including our own era.

Decadence, suffocation and decay rule the atmosphere, impregnating the air with a nearing threat.

What will happen when the Candle Baby has grown up? Who shall take up arms and who shall succeed at pulling the sword out of the rock? Who will be the new "Arthur" confronting injustice? And is the castle a safe haven? But, above all, who is or what constitutes this doom? These questions relate to fundamental feelings regarding fear, hope, malaise and (illusive) happiness.

The elemental and stylistic confusion appears to be indicative of Studio Job's personal malaise and universal moral confusion about this interval of time in which the difference between good and evil becomes increasingly muddled.

The irony lies in the soothing remedy as prescribed by Smeets and Tynagel for the discomfort they invoked.

The public can "combat" said discomfort by arming itself with a number of conflicting symbols such as bronze rings, dead birds, arrows and daggers. These symbols hail from the treasure-chest to which only artists possess the key.

It remains to be seen that the observer is served by these symbols, as amulets do not necessarily drive away misfortune.

Smeets and Tynagel prove themselves to be astute directors as they turn their observers into participants, enveloping them in their story line by means of a cleverly construed and deliberate confusion while being inspired by the fields of art, design and fashion. Moreover, these artists turn their public into subjects of the "mechanism of consumption" making this piece of art an example of one of the most characteristic features of our time: the habit of striving after immaterial values by collecting material objects.

Design victims Smeets and Tynagel leave their public fearful and confused with only their new must-have accessories to cling to in order to ward off danger. Smeets and Tynagel do not inform us of the outcome of that story; we will have to wait until the next season."

London, January 2003, Sue-an van der Zijpp,
curator contemporary art Groninger Museum, The Netherlands