

PANTOMIMA XXX

ALAN STEFANATO

CURATED BY SERGEY KANTSSEDAL
WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF YULIYA SAY

The moon was high in the dark night, the bright rays surrounding her looked alive, drawing sharp black lines. P contemplated the moon every night so long that his face had become as white as her rays, and his black and white clothes as her two faces. That night he noticed something strange about her and decided to speak to her. She replied...

P: Being on the surface allows you to breathe the air of sky
 LU: The lights you see in the abyss are monsters who want to eat you
 P: Thank god I see well
 LU: Don't look, see
 P: Living in the countryside desensitizes
 LU: Blisters grow under your feet because they love nature
 P: Colors are spectral
 LU: The sun is white like me
 P: A door without handles is a wall
 LU: Windows are expressions of houses
 P: Peach is a fruit for small ports
 LU: Plants are patients they don't need hospitals
 P: Castles are built in buckets.
 LU: If you're not wet you're dry
 P: You don't have time between the queues
 LU: Sunrise is a lady who goes to the post office
 P: Taps are diverted rivers
 LU: Snow is an error
 P: The wheel was invented by flat-earththers
 LU: Strange is rotating
 P: Memory is a physical exercise
 LU: Culture brings bad shit
 LU: A man cannot give birth a woman can choose
 P: Natural is all that is not sparkling
 LU: Horses are carnivores turned vegetarian
 P: Dinosaurs are made of bones
 LU: Shark is a masterpiece dogfish is frightening
 P: Pit bulls are mental projections
 LU: Fate is not a fairy male
 P: A geek with glasses is a fantasy image
 LU: All Ukrainians are blond
 P: Aunt is a sister
 P: Life keeps your feet away from your ears
 LU: A good posture makes you walk standing taller

LU: Who counts years will have death to reckon with
 P: The wolf can't count
 P: Wool pinches sheep bites
 LU: Sweet dreams

In a garden, a swing squeaks, it swings lightly, not at all upset by the weight of P, who was sitting on it.

Alan Stefanato

Barriera presents a solo show by Alan Stefanato (Trieste, 1992), who lives and works in Turin since 2018. His practice is the result of an autodidactic path outside the main Academies and art schools, and it acts through the medium of painting yet looking beyond it, incorporating other languages over time, such as drawing and sculpture. Stefanato uses the traditional technique of oil painting, which with time led him to conceive different possibilities and solutions. A first period, hallmarkd by landscapes inhabited by surreal and grotesque characters, is followed by a second period distinguished by a more abstract style, made of backgrounds, shapes, colors and sensations and based on a meticulous process of phenomenal observation of nature and altered mimesis.

The project encompasses a corpus of unpublished works that further develops this line of research, highlighting the expressiveness of the technique, the pictorial sign and its spontaneous ramification. Painting is reduced to an instinctive act rather than a decorative one: the work session, which can last even up to 12 hours, is never over until the work is completed. The time spent to create a painting is usually quite limited, so that improvisation and discovery are essential features of the production, experienced as a deeply intimate and intense experience.

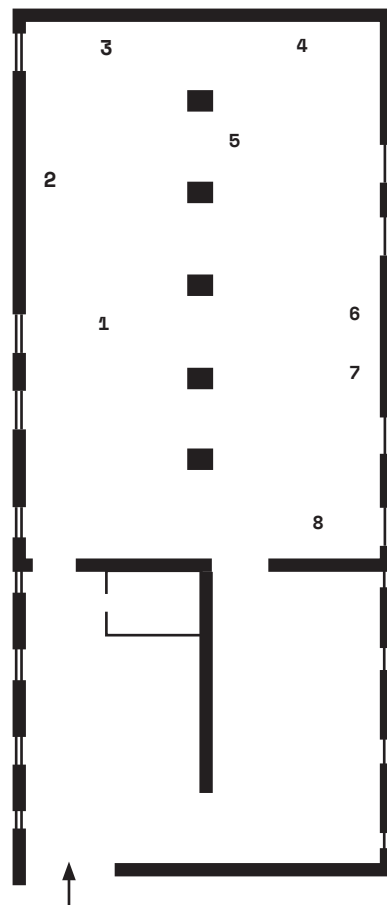
Unlike neo-expressionist approach that emphasizes the material nature of paint application, Stefanato focuses on hiding the gesture. This is why he paints

in fresco: once the color dries, the artist does not add another paint layer, so that the shapes can soften, blending imperceptibly between them thanks to subtle gradations of light and color.

Pantomima XXX considers the idea of the frame as a device that suggests an interpretation of the exhibition. The frame, whose function is not only to delimit a canvas, but also to contain the space represented in the painting, in this case performs a more open function. Made in op-art style, combining abstract subjects and colors, the frames' patterns trigger an unsettling and nauseating effect that projects the work towards a fourth dimension and fuels a tension between the ideas of belonging and destination, reality and fiction. As a *fil rouge* that runs through the entire project, the alternation of black and white is part of a lively and expressive narrative, a pantomime conceived as a wordless action of theatrical representation. Meanwhile, this alternation establishes a parallelism with the pictorial practice as a silent language made of gestures and movement applied to the canvas. The para-theatrical imagination reveals itself starting from an unreal dialogue between the Moon and Pierrot, a character who lost his slyness and duplicity to become a melancholic mime who is in love with the moon - the same Gilles of the famous painting by Antoine Watteau.

The conversation between Pierrot and the Moon is a crosstalk that follows a succession of paradoxical visions and associations, a surreal and sometimes dreamlike chat. An atmosphere reflected especially in the text written by the artist, but also in some of the paintings' titles – *Il lupo non sa contare* (The wolf can't count), *I rubinetti sono fiumi deviati* (Taps are diverted rivers) and *Vivere in campagna desensibilizza* (Living in the countryside desensitizes) – which, together with the installation and visual parts, participate in the definition of the goliardic character of the show and establish a dialogue between its various elements.

- 1 *Pantomima XXX*, 170 × 30 × 3 cm, wood, plaster, acrylic, 2022
- 2 *Sweet dreams*, 110 × 140 cm, oil on canvas, 2021
- 3 *Living in the countryside desensitizes*, 150 × 200 cm, oil on canvas, 2021
- 4 *The wolf can't count*, 150 × 100 cm, oil on canvas, 2021
- 5 *Pierrot*, 40 × 20 cm, porcelain, 2022
- 6 *Taps are diverted rivers*, 200 × 150 cm, oil on canvas, 2021
- 7 *Plants are patients they don't need hospitals*, 200 × 90 cm, oil on canvas, 2021
- 8 *Lu*, 30 × 30 cm, plaster, fabric, chain, 2022



Sergey Kantsedal

Barriera is a non-profit association for contemporary art founded in Turin in 2007 by a group of art collectors. Through a series of initiatives, exhibitions and events, this art space creates opportunities for dialogue between artists, curators and collectors and engenders contaminations with other cultural environments. Barriera promotes curatorial strategies that encourage young artists to continue and widen their research while orienting it, through a sharing process, towards a production fed by the site specificities.

Barriera is curated by Sergey Kantsedal and Yuliya Say.

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