

O Youth and Beauty! | **Anna Bjerger, Louis Fratino, Waldemar Zimbelmann**

curated by **Luigi Fassi**

from 9 November 2018 to 3 March 2019

Opening: 7 p.m. Friday 9 November 2018

From **9 November 2018** to **3 March 2019**, the **MAN** Museo d'Arte Provincia di Nuoro presents *O Youth and Beauty!*, a group exhibition bringing together works by **Anna Bjerger, Louis Fratino** and **Waldemar Zimbelmann**, curated by **Luigi Fassi**.

O Youth and Beauty! takes its title from the eponymous tale by **John Cheever**, in which the American writer describes everyday life poised between beauty and regret, with the outlying, suburban setting painting a picture of post-war American conformism. In the same way, the works by Anna Bjerger (Sweden, 1973), Louis Fratino (United States, 1994) and Waldemar Zimbelmann (Kazakhstan, 1984), which share an intimate approach to figurative painting, attempt to portray these artists' cultural identity by layering together realistic and fictional elements. By utilizing figurative painting, fragments of daily life became the tool used to shape their experience, dominated by tones of melancholy and a cultural identity that appears uncertain and fleeting.

Anna Bjerger's paintings draw upon anonymous photographs to traces blurred profiles in indeterminate settings. The subjects, captured on the cusp of revealing their identity, are depicted in domestic environments and natural landscapes. The artist does not provide any further narrative clues, and the contraction of the scenes remains unresolved, through a combination of perspectives, close-up details and unfocused backdrops.

Louis Fratino has created a sophisticated body of work inspired by the history of classical and modern art. Using drawing and oil on canvas, he composes an ode to everyday life. The protagonists of his works are young men, depicted in peaceful everyday scenes, but also lovers wrapped up in passion, where the meditative register alternates with the melancholic, ranging from solitude to the euphoria of social relationships. His works pay homage to friends, desire and regret associated with fleeting metropolitan encounters.

Inspired by the 1960s and '70s, **Waldemar Zimbelmann's** illustrations feature living subjects such as animals, children and female figures set in natural landscapes and domestic interiors. The characters reveal the cultural influences that have characterized the life of this artist, who was born into a German minority family in a rural area of Kazakhstan, which later re-emigrated to Germany when he was still a child. Zimbelmann's works adopt a twofold approach:

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literary, because they seem to be inspired by an iconography that is not far removed from the dimension of myths and fairy tales; textural, through the use and inclusion of recycled materials that interact with each other, establishing a sensation of tactile perception in the viewer.

By comparing three different figurative painterly expressions, the exhibition identifies a hypothetical story, transforming gestures and situations into a suffused and uncertain melancholy.

We would like to thank the institutions that support the MAN: Regione Sardegna, Provincia di Nuoro and Fondazione di Sardegna.