

No Added Preservatives / Roy Maayan

Curator: Erez Maayan

Periscope Design & Neo Craft Gallery

Opening: 12.12.13 at 8pm

Closing: 11.1.14

The installation "No Preservatives" presents clay artist Roy Maayan's memory of his childhood's food sites, and across from them places portraits of his "feeders". When displacing reality into memory and from memory back to matter, the images go through an array of transformations – from iconic glorification to distortion and hideousness. Memory becomes a mere shell. On one hand, the dining table is excessive, overflowing, it bubbles and oozes, and on the other hand it's full of passion and lust. The images are inspired by 17th century Flemish food paintings, only instead of exotic, tantalizing dishes, this installation's dishes represent a heightened ideal of the 'Israeli' dining table, which is based on both personal and the collective biographies, but these lose their distinctness, their shape, their seductiveness. This food installation invites the spectator into the collective memory of the chicken, Ptitim (uniquely Israeli tiny pasta), eggplants and soup meal, only they are no longer themselves, they've become their own decay and disintegration, just barely recognizable. 'Everyone's' meal has turned into 'Nobody's' meal. The familiar loses its familiarity and becomes foreign, different and foreboding – but at the same time gains eternal iconic life in matter.

The food's nourishing functionality and its transience are expropriated and it thus becomes inedible, toxic and eternal, and therefore foreboding. The Freudian nondomestic atmosphere resides in the entire space, functioning as an interwoven representation of both the familiar and the foreign. The nondomestic is based in the familiar, in "what is known of old", in what has been accustomed to being experienced as cordial, intimate, warm and personal, and becomes a source of disturbing alienation caused not by its foreignness, but rather by its familiar aspects. The dinner table, abundant with food, like a feast that never took place and now never could, invites the spectator to wander around it as if in an intimate familiar space, but nullifies any hope of feeling welcome in it, as well as undermines its nostalgic potential, subversively creating disquiet.

Facing the food installation are the four "feeders", as icons of soft femininity, they too are simultaneously particular and universal. The enduring fixation of the women made of glaze and gold luster on clay in high incineration provides them with a mythical dimension. These women also are representations of the artist's personal and private and at the same time implied as collective "mother", "grandmother" or "woman", as comforting, nourishing, eternal Madonnas of sorts juxtaposed to the discomfort to which the guest is invited at the clay meal.

The exhibition is the culmination of a lengthy exploration of matter by the artist, who manipulates materials and glazes for the purpose of creating new materials and materiality alongside his research of matter's performative facet.