



Sturm und drunk

A duo exhibition of Joost Pauwaert and
Marco de Sanctis

08 septembre until 20 octobre '22

On the seduction of destruction

Dauwens & Beernaert is pleased to present a duo exhibition in collaboration with Marco De Sanctis en Jooſt Pauwaert: Sturm und Drunk.



The duo exhibition is an encounter between the works of Belgian artist Jooſt Pauwaert (°1985, lives and works in Ghent) and the works of Italian artist Marco De Sanctis (IT, °1983, lives and works in Brussels). All works were made on the occasion of the exhibition. The exhibition investigates the interferences and tensions between the distinct bodies of work, with the work of one artist providing the framework for the other.

The exhibition title is a humorous nod to the proto-romantic Sturm und Drang movement in German literature of the latter half of the 18th century. The Sturm und Drang movement was characterized by literature containing extremely violent action and high emotionalism. The novels often deal with the protagonist's revolt against society and his opposition to established forms of thought and rationalism. The Sturm und Drang movement in the visual arts

can be witnessed in romanticised paintings of dramatic storms and shipwrecks showing the terror and irrational destruction wrought by nature.

The most prevalent common denominator of both artists' work included in Sturm und Drunk is probably the seduction of destruction. The way that both artists explore this theme is however completely different. Where Marco De Sanctis uses destruction as a gentle helping hand, Jooſt Pauwaert thematizes the destruction process itself. Whereas Marco De Sanctis work is rooted in stillness and the sacred, Jooſt Pauwaert's work is predominated by brutal kinetic power and the profane.

Sturm und Drunk features a new series of Marines by Marco De Sanctis. The works consist of an intervention on existing ancient paintings that were acquired by the artist at flea markets and antique dealers. Marco De Sanctis first carefully restored and cleaned these paintings. In a next phase, he removed the original layers of paint in such way that a battleship becomes visible on the original canvas. Where Marco's artistic intervention qualifies as an iconoclastic act, the result is a contemporary work that creates possibilities for new narratives which the viewer can fill in himself or herself.



The involvement of the viewer - or at least the collector - goes even further in the series of works titled "I-Swore". These sculptures consist of a wax cast mould of the head of a swordfish. A wick is inserted at the middle of the sculpture. In a first step, the wick is lit like a candle. It is up to the collector to decide when the candle will be blown out.

The still image of the wax mould will subsequently be cast in bronze and will form the final sculpture. The title of the work and also the involvement of the collector refers to the Christian ritual whereby a candle can be purchased in a church to redeem divine providence. On the one hand, the title plays on the creation process and the devotional aspect (“I-Swore”) but also on the represented (“I-Sword”). This work also contains a deeper historical reference, the swords (“gladius”) of gladiators - which were also produced in bronze - were often inspired by swordfish.



Jooſt Pauwaert’s work is simultaneously playful and humorous but also apocalyptic. On the one hand his sculptures, collages and drawings, emanate great violence, but they are also deeply poetic. The works bear witness to a boyish and romantic interest in experimentation and destruction but also have something ominous about them. Using recognizable objects such as anvils, circular saws, hammers, humming top, etc. as allegories, Jooſt creates (often kinetic) sculptures that carry this ambivalence within them.

In a series of sculptures Jooſt Pauwaert deprives these utensils of their original teleology and thereby creates a field of tension that on the one hand exerts a great deal of attraction, but on the other hand also causes shivers. Several sculp-



tures include a hammer, axe or saw-blade that is attached to a spring. In one sculpture the hammer is tensioned by a cord. A tension is literally and figuratively created that tempts the viewer to activate the sculpture’s destructive potential by cutting the cord. In the second sculpture that features a hammer, the hammer dances in an aggressive manner on the spring which is on its turn driven by a motor. The kinetic sculpture is ominous on the one hand, but there is also a great seductiveness about it on the other hand. The same tension can be found in a sculpture where a chopping axe is tensioned

to the wall via a spring. The work has great appeal, but could just as easily be used as a DIY suicide machine.

On the occasion of *Sturm und Drunk*, Jooſt Pauwaert also made a series of standalone works that build on his latest performance that took place in August in the Flemish town of Beernem. The performance is titled ‘A new study for an end of the world’ - *Homage to Jean Tinguely*.

The performance consisted of a staging of an apocalyptic battle scene on a lake in which several triplex boats (which resembled folded paper boats), balloons and also a zeppelin fell prey to a barrage of missiles, hammers and other projectiles. As the title of the performance suggests, the performance also paid tribute to the work and more particular the performances by kinetic sculptor Jacques Tinguely (*Étude pour une fin du monde*) staged in 1961 and 1962. The basis of ‘A new study for an end of the world’ consists of a black and white photographic representation of the “battlefield” of Jooſt’s performance. The triptych is however not a documentary record of the performance. The triptych was



treated with a mix of gunpowder charcoal and varnish, that was subsequently lit, creating plumes of smoke on the photograph, which gives the work also a performative and kinetic dimension. A series of bronze cast books titled “De Ballonvaarders” feature a UV-print of the above mentioned performance. The sculptures are somewhere a humorous nod to the romanticizing of dangerous and disastrous events such as the Hindenberg disasters, and the sad fate of Madame Blanchard. This is perhaps the core of Jooſt’s work, the duality between the romance and seduction of danger and the dangers of romanticizing.

Marco De Sanctis

Marco De Sanctis (°1983, Milan) lives and works in Brussels and Italy.

Marco De Sanctis literally and figuratively introduces a temporal dynamic in his work. Temporal shifts, reinterpretations of and interventions on existing works challenge the legitimacy and art historical legacy of contemporary artistic practices. Marco De Sanctis works challenge the duality between the copy and the original, investigate the transmission (methods) of images and the position of a contemporary artist vis-à-vis this art historical heritage.



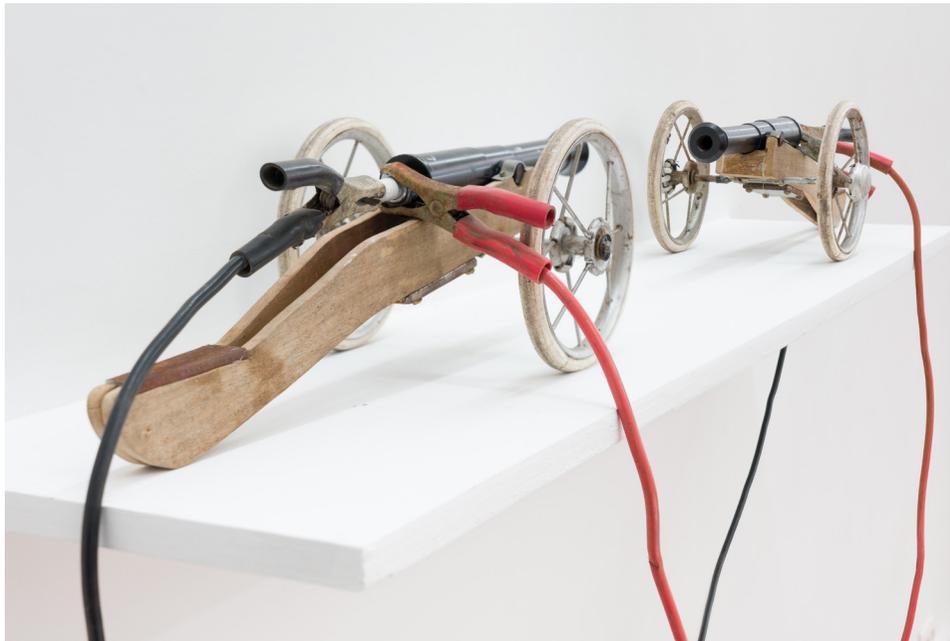
Joost Pauwaert

Joost Pauwaert (BE, °1985) loves heavy wooden and metal machines and objects such as anvils, cannons and giant saw blades. He makes the machines himself, starting from technical challenges. Can he make a heavy anvil balance on a spring? Or catapult it and catch it in a funnel? Can he make his own cannon? Or make two cannons fire at each other simultaneously so that the cannonballs hit each other and deform?

The artistic beauty of these ventures derives from the originality of the questions, on the opposite side of the usual forms of artistic expression.

Actually, they precede and take us back to times when science and art were closer to each other than today. Or they lead us back to fundamental questions in sculpture, which always had to do with gravity and density.

Here we come closer to a fundamental poetry, which stems from the beauty of things themselves.



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