

WHAT IF A CRETIN TELLS YOU THAT ALL CRETINS ARE LIARS?

I gather information in a very scattered way. They can come from cooking practices, crafts, hunting techniques, to rules of etiquette, role playing, card decks or medieval banquet engravings. Especially things that represent a convivial moment of gathering and sharing, but where power play and social structures are really influential.

I like to distance myself from the references I use, to make sure they won't be taken too literally. Which is why I like the idea of the bluff, the playful lie.

I've been observing, stealing and distorting a lot and sometimes I don't even really know where all this is coming from. (which doesn't matter because you're not supposed to know). I guess it's something that always eventually ends up happening. They end up like chinese whispers.

making whistles out of salami skin, how to braid with eight strands, the reading of the tarot card Le Bateleur, how to heal sunburns with potatoes, hunting scents, bamboo fish traps, soft boiled egg recipes, mongolian hotpots, tongue in cheeks, roman emperors, basket houses, the sexy son hypothesis, the seven basic plots, birds' relation to beauty, martial art training tools, aboriginal songlines, it's what i have in mind, it's what is on my desk.

And with all that I'm trying to do sculptural work that through shapes, materials and colors builds narratives from common knowledge, formal language and connotations, bias and clichés.

Recently I've been trying to make characters through sculptural structures, turning them into figures with their own personality. Working with textures, colors, making human scale pieces within series; i was trying to create a possibility to read them as a family, or any other kind of social group. I'm interested in their structural potential, the power play between characters.

Maybe it's a wedding, a diner party or a poker night, maybe it's a crime scene in a summerhouse, sometime over lunch.

You've been invited because you're somehow special, you are here to let yourself go on the delicacies of celebration, food, flesh and flavors, and at the same time you cheer not to be poisoned, you drink fast not to feel uncomfortable, you don't finish your plate not to appear famished.

the gambler, the kid, the housemaster, the impersonator, the trickster, the stranger, the drunk

Do they have a puppetmaster? Are they dancing their own choreography? Do they know the rules and are they being played? Are they faking? Are they guilty?

I'm really into the idea that they are unreliable. They can be opportunistic and change identity to their advantage. Maybe they end up having a lot of faces because I don't really want to give them any. The good guy in the movie always ends up being the worst traitor, or is it the bad guy that is actually good deep inside?

I like to think of these Hong Kong movies where Chinese mobsters end up meeting in restaurants. They're always dealing and eating at the same time. But at any moment somebody can shoot. *Does he have a fucking gun?* They are laughing and talking and slurping so loud so that no one knows who is more scared.

Maybe I'm not looking for such a noisy moment, maybe I'm more into some kind of judgemental stiffness. You observe them as much as they observe you. Like this silent guy that's always sitting at parties, drinking without saying a word. I've been working a lot with this idea of families, but I also realize that I'm really interested in the figure of the stranger, the guy who was not invited, the guy no one knows and who doesn't say a thing about his past.

When your existence within a group lies in the fact that you are a stranger to it, what do you become when this group is not around? When your neighbor is also someone's stranger? It could be quite a weird situation. But you have to keep your chin up. what's your move here? no way you team up. you're a stranger. you gather your own cards and hope for the best.

Something that happens often in the way people socialize is that they like to talk, believe in things, and tell stories. I am quite intrigued by how people (storytellers, elders) and things (furniture, objects, books) involved in transmitting informations will eventually end up distorting, or lying or cheating about these stories.

Then you also realize that most stories are the same. There only are seven stories in the world, as they say. When I collect references, I'm not interested in their specificity but how similar they can be.

From that point of view things start to look very blurry and open. Playing upon that I'm trying to create casts and decors that could be part of various stories. With characters and props that would have their own type of storytelling, mimicking traditions and customs. They have no backstory. As if they were part of some kind of moralistic tale for kid that would have no conclusion. You won't know what was good and bad, who was the nice guy and who's the villain.

In this sense of reliability, veracity and trust, I'm interested in playful relations. I tend to see my sculptures as part of something like a deck of cards. Depending on how I pair them up it can be a good or a bad hand. my king can be a good card, it can also be a useless one. I tell you, maybe your jack is going to win. But how far are you able to trust a sculpture?



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