



I'm Losing More
Than I'll
Ever Have

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(*The Practice of Everyday Life*)
Smart Project Space, Amsterdam
27 May – 29 July

The 1987 song from which this exhibition takes its name, by Scottish alt rock band Primal Scream, sounds to me like a poppy love track rather than an anthem for disenfranchised youth unsettled by Thatcherism, as claimed in the press release. Still, there is enough challenging work on view here

that one could easily overlook this subjective judgement of an otherwise fitting moniker.

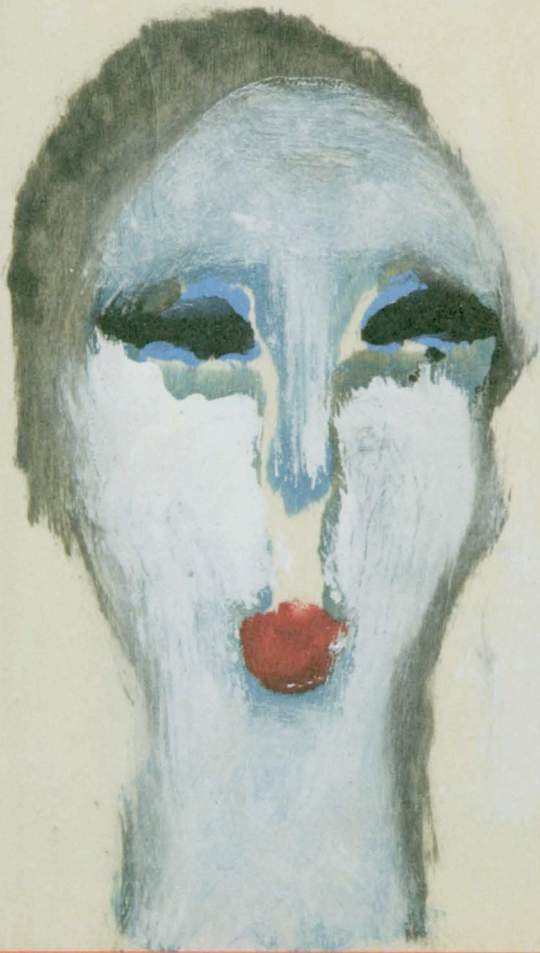
Among a wide variety of mixed-media works, situated in a room painted bright lime-green, are two pieces that put a tragicomic spin on the exhibition's premise – which alludes to Guy Debord's situationist theory of the spectacle, pointing out the contrast between the reality of our individual lives and the commodified experiences offered as substitutes by the mass media. The oil painting *Skirmish* (2012), by Bas de Boer, for example, presents a violent scene in which hands holding weapons – such as a hammer and a brick – jut out from the middle of a large dust cloud, depicted in a cartoony manner familiar from comic strips. Whether the incident is to be taken literally or metaphorically is open to debate, but the inclusion of a thin black arm and hand alludes to the marketable aspect of racial tension. Magnus Monfeldt's slow-motion series of videos, *The Lion Sleeps Tonight, I-IV* (2012), meanwhile, shows a man attempting to eat a hotdog that dangles from a string, jumping up to bite the elusive frankfurter yet missing every time.

Elsewhere, one finds Christian Marclay's *Record Without a Cover* (1985), a sonic collage appropriated from existing records that was released *sans* sleeve, so that wear and tear would eventually take the hissing and popping of vinyl to the extreme, causing the resultant scratches to affect the playback while giving each user a unique listening experience. The relatively simple yet ingenious concept emphasises the importance of the role of the individual, as a sole agency or as a collaborator of sorts. *Gargles from Ipanema* (2011), Dennis Tyfus's five-channel video installation of an older woman making sexual and flirtatious gestures towards the viewer in front of kitschy Op art and fake-looking backgrounds, whose soundtrack is a spaced-out version of the song *The Girl from Ipanema*, looks like a John Currin painting come to life. Unquestionably provocative, Tyfus's blatant portrayal may repel; a barrage of objections and hate mail greeted its showing in Mechelen, Belgium, as part of the moving-image biennial *Contour 2011*. More caustic than Cindy Sherman's satires of matronly society women, the over-the-top character study nevertheless comments on physical attributes that fade over time, an unfortunate matter usually avoided as a result of the youth-centric bias of the majority of advertising and commercial entertainment.

Werner Herzog's 3D film *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* (2010), a lush documentation of the Chauvet cave in southern France, home to the earliest paintings known to man, is ostensibly the most straightforward work here. Yet it is linked to the thesis of the exhibition through its analysis of the representations of animals on the cave's walls. These Herzog describes as protocinema: a pure form of expression, unsoiled by commercial intent.

CHRIS BORS

Marisa Merz
Untitled, 2012. Photo: Paolo Pellion.
Courtesy Fondazione Merz, Turin



Dennis Tyfus
(see *I'm Losing More Than I'll Ever Have*,
Gargles from Ipanema, 2011
(installation view), video, loop.
Photo: Niels Vis. Courtesy Smart
Project Space, Amsterdam

