

FRANCK SCURTI BETWEEN DARK AND LIGHT IN GENEVA

BY PHILIPPE RÉGNIER

The Mamco, in Geneva, is a constantly evolving museum, a place where the borders have gradually become more porous, where the permanent collections are temporary exhibitions and vice versa. The presentation currently proposed by Franck Scurti at the Geneva-based institution is perfectly in line with this logic, with two rooms that share a common framework, but on two different registers, like two sides of the same world, one in the dark and the other in the light. Each display is the fruit of a very consistent dialogue between the artworks, perfectly in line with the trilogy implemented for many years by the artist: "Home - Street - Museum."

The first room called "The Brown Concept," has a collection of pieces where we see the same brown tinge, for example a distorted piece of paper (*The Brown Concept*, 2013) or a plank of treated wood on which a painted hanger is hooked (*Redemption*, 2012). If brown is the colour of a downgrade, the very title of this room also alludes to the British botanist Robert Brown, who in 1827 identified the constant movement of particulate matter, now known as the Brownian motion. Franck Scurti's work is fuelled by fortuitous encounters, by these objects that he finds by chance, often on the journey between home and his studio. The creative process induced by these scraps provides them with a new lease of life and, as the artist says, "promotes what is at the bottom and reverses value systems." This approach is in close affinity with the Dadaists, for example Kurt Schwitters incorporating bits of paper and objets trouvés from the streets of Hanover in his compositions. This reference to the history of art is not coincidental since *The Scream* (2010) is displayed in the same room, a personal interpretation of Edvard Munch's work produced from salvaged timber, steel wire, a painted cardboard tube and a vase. The dramatic density of the Norwegian's painting is entirely formed from humble materials that restore the lines of force and tension.

On the other hand the second exhibition room appears like a burst of light. Here, the reference to the



View of the exhibition "Franck Scurti, The Brown Concept & New Lights from Nowhere". Photo: Illmari Kalkkinen - Mamco, Geneva.

studio is more direct. Thus the address of Franck Scurti's studio, 34, rue Dunois (in the 13th district in Paris), is inscribed on the large piece presented at the centre of the feature, a door covered with a painted rainbow (*Nouvelle Lumière de Nulle Part/New Light from Nowhere*, 2014). Here the artist questions the conditions surrounding the appearance of things and their autonomy. Coffee stains on paper are the starting point for autonomous research on colour (*Starbucks Studies*, 2013), and on the working table (*Starbucks Studies (working table)*, 2013). Further on, plaster that has hardened in its bag is a *Torso* (2014), again a reference to the history of art.

This dimension takes on a new aspect further on in the exhibition with the film *Certifié pour copie conforme (Certified Copy)*, produced by the artist in 2011 and screened here for the first time. In this work, Hans Maria De Wolf is in discussion with Ulf Linde, who in 1961 produced a copy of *La mariée mise à nu par ses célibataires, même (Le Grand Verre)*, *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)* by Marcel Duchamp for the Moderna Museet in Stockholm. Extraordinary documentary evidence. ■

FRANCK SCURTI, THE BROWN CONCEPT & NEW LIGHTS FROM NOWHERE, until 18th May, Mamco, 10, rue des Vieux-Grenadiers, Geneva, Switzerland, tel. + 41 22 320 61 22, www.mamco.ch