



Embodiment

Anton Alvarez and Leo Park

22 - 27 November 2022

Cromwell Place, London



Berntson Bhattacharjee is delighted to present an exhibition of new works by Anton Alvarez (b.1980) and Leo Park (b. 1980).

Park and Alvarez are both based in Stockholm and represent the dynamism of the contemporary Swedish art scene. Working in oil, Park paints large scale works which blur the line between abstraction and figuration. Alvarez fuses cutting edge technology with the traditional medium of clay to create beautiful sculptural forms. Taking inspiration from each others' practices they have created a harmonious body of work, celebrating their unique skills, colour palettes and forms. The title of the exhibition, *Embodiment*, encapsulates both the theme of the work, but also the collaborative process between Alvarez and Park.

The concept of embodiment has been explored by artists and thinkers in the past, such as Pablo Picasso (1881 - 1973) and Henry Moore (1898 - 1986), as well as the Roman architect Vitruvius (1st Century BC). The aesthetics and symbolism of the human form, as well as the deconstruction of it, were explored in depth by these artists. Park's fragmentary figures can be reminiscent of Picasso and Moore's

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fleshy and unpredictable forms, meanwhile Alvarez's engineering of clay to create anthropomorphic columns echoes back to Vitruvian principles, the proportions of the human form being the central inspiration.

Alvarez' and Park's works are a direct response to a society that has been shaped by technology, where the human form can almost be seen as redundant. Alvarez uses technology in his creative process to create organic shapes, whereas Park incorporates elements from today's digital society into his paintings. This exhibition celebrates the two artists' exploration of the past, but also how they embody and comment on the present, post-digital world.

About the artists

Leo Park (b.1980) is a Swedish artist based in Stockholm. He received his MFA in 2019 from Konstfack University of Arts, Craft & Design in Stockholm.

Leo Park's practice is rooted in both art history and pop culture, sourcing motifs and stylistic influences from the past and present. Working in oil, he creates figurative paintings. The figures are usually covered in tattoo-like inscriptions which recall graffiti or even ancient cave paintings. His visual world is inhabited by well-known myths and tropes in which themes such as desire, creation and death are explored. In his work, Leo is rooting himself into the Postdigital age by creating a link between language, humans and our bodies.

Recent solo exhibitions include; 'Eat Dream Scream', DUVE, Berlin (2022); 'The Speed of Ice Cream', GR Gallery, New York (2022); 'Sommaren är kort/Summer Is Swift', Gallery Steinsland Berliner, Stockholm (2022). Recent group exhibitions include; Armory Show, "Manscaping" & 'Universes 5, The Hole, New York, (2022); Null Protocol" Func Gallery, Shanghai, (2022); Annual Show Vins Gallery, Taipei (2022), Market Art Fair, Steinsland Berliner (2022), 'Mixed Pickles 10', Ruttkowski;68, Köln, (2021).

He has been awarded several awards for his practice, including the X:et Eriksson Grant by The Royal Swedish Academy of Fine Arts, and from The Swedish Arts Grants Committee.

Anton Alvarez (b.1980) is a Swedish-Chilean artist, currently based in Stockholm. He graduated from the Royal College of Art, London in 2012 with an MFA, after completing his BFA at Konstfack, Stockholm, in 2009.



Anton's sculptural forms explore the relationship between human creation and mechanical apparatus. His practice focuses on technical innovation, designing systems and tools which produce fully formed objects and architecture. While remaining at the forefront of his methods, Alvarez allows his machines to dictate the aesthetics of his work. Form and texture are determined by The Extruder, a self-constructed, 3 tonne strong ceramic press which discharges huge columns of warped clay. While subtly dictating the direction his works take, Alvarez prefers his sculptures to appear as if they had been made within nature. Thus, he opts to use wood, ceramic, and thread, materials we interact with daily. The works challenge our perception of weight and gravity and appear to be soft and organic, as well as hard and artificial. Anton continues to playfully push the boundaries, creating works rich in tradition and at the same time utterly unconventional to create a truly unique and surprising sculptural environment.

Recent solo exhibitions include; 'Honey', Millesgården Museum, Stockholm (2022), 'Under Pressure', Rörstrands Museum, Lidköping, Sweden (2022), 'The Remnants', Bishopsgate 100, London (2022), 'Tight Squeeze', Huxley Parlour, London (2021), 'Roman Toothpaste', Vandalorum, Värnamo, Sweden (2021), 'The Flavour is So Strong', Larsen Warner, Stockholm (2019), 'L'Ultima Cera', Church San Bernardino alle Monache, Milan (2019), 'Visual Vertigo', Espace Muraille, Geneva, Switzerland (2018). 'Villeggiatura', Nevve Gallery, Cascina Gilli, Castelnuovo Don Bosco, Italy (2022), 'Primary An exhibition in three colours', Larsen Warner Falsterbo, Stockholm (2022), 'Layererd', Larsen Warner, Stockholm (2022), 'Toucher Terre', Fondation Fondation Villa Datris, L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, France (2022), 'Ghost in the machine', Thomasesen Gallery, Gothenburg, Sweden (2021), 'This Must Be the Place', Villa Schöningen, Potsdam, Germany (2021), 'Mixed Pickles 9', Ruttkowski 68, München, Germany.

Anton's work is included in the public collections of the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden; Denver Art Museum, Colorado, USA and the Röhsska Museum, Gothenburg, Sweden.