

BAERTGALLERY



Ana Ibarra. Elephant 5 (Dec 1 2010) Colorful Hedonism. Print



Interview with Ludovica Gioscia

Ludovica Gioscia was born in Rome and came to London to study Fine Arts and the influence of these two cities has marked all her work. Her Roman heritage, her living in constant contact with the baroque and in a city layered with architectural styles, made her embrace a maximalist aesthetic. The layers of wallpaper that she discovered in her first apartment when she first moved to London sowed a seed in her head. It all came together when she started working with layers, between pop culture and hedonism, somewhere between art and fashion.

What does your work try to explore?

In all of my work I look at hedonism. Exploring hedonism without drawing any boundaries, like having an orgy of food as hedonism, having too much stuff or having too many visuals. I am interested in how ideas around entertainment have developed in time. The wallpaper installations are really about media culture and all the layers of information and how bombarded we are.

With these installations, where do you start and where do you go?

They are very much based on the baroque aesthetics. In those days it was pretty much about political propaganda the way a church would have every surface covered: they wanted you to be a catholic but also remind you what your place was within the system. I think there is an element of the excess of entertainment today which does the same thing. All the wallpapers are quite specific. Some I find, but others I actually design the patterns myself, which gives more depth and has actually become a trademark in my work. The papers are little codes and are all in general related to the entertainment industry.

How do you decide how to rip the paper?

At the beginning the ripping was totally random but the more you do it the more you know what you are going to find when you dig. There is something about the randomness that actually works, because you are allowing for lateral thinking, allowing for mistakes. For the 'Bomarzo Vertigo' it was all completely staged, because I wanted the face to appear so it was more of a conceptual choice. With 'Paninaro', I actually think I am going to have it random again.

What is the Paninaro project you are working on?

The Paninaro phenomenon was one of the first really visible experiments in teenage marketing, at least in Italy. It was a phenomenon that came out at the beginning of the eighties when we had a real optimistic outlook on America and we were being Americanised with all the sitcoms on Berlusconi's TV channels. There were Paninaro fanzines and stylistically they were copying very much American sports' leisure. There were textiles companies like Naj-Oleari that created a whole pattern galaxy, and you would buy the shoes, the shirt, the jacket, the headband, the books, the wallpaper... ..literally they sold everything. There was this idea that if you bought into all of that you'd have all the hottest girls. It was that in conjunction with kids starting to buy the items and the comic books. It was very main stream and I think it was something that really shaped our culture at the time. Actually whenever I've asked my friends if they could lend me stuff of the time they either disposed of it because it was a phase that you'd be very ashamed of, or you will have become a real fetishist and wouldn't want to separate yourself from it.

What is the idea behind the Vomitoriums?

These sculptures are based around the whole cliché' idea of the Roman vomitorium and how they used to binge eat and had a place to vomit which was called 'vomitorium'. The vomitorium in fact is an architectural term and it means the point in which crowds would enter and exit the stadiums and I guess that because of this idea of flux we inherited the verb 'to vomit'. I built these shapes that will be filled with collages and fabrics that look as if they were vomiting pop culture. These works are also inspired by the idea of Zygmunt Bauman that we achieve satisfaction once we have really totally consumed the object.

Is your work a critique of consumerism?

When you make art, you can criticise in a way that doesn't have to be black and white. I think we have reached a level of over-saturation that nobody embraces. Whether we like it or not, we are born to consume. On one hand, I am being very critical, and on the other, I am seduced by it myself and that's why I maintain an aesthetic of desire as opposed to an aesthetic of disgust.