

Identification

The object of intrigue, the starting point for undertaking this painting series, is the question of identification of the subject with some type of image. In some cases it can be said: the common person's intense need for identification with some type of image and iconography, which helps him to situate himself in the world, so demanding and replete with more layers than we are able to see, or so much as visit. When one wakes up in the morning, in bed, in the bedroom, at home, it is a leafy, real and palpable world...which immediately becomes strange when the newspaper is opened, and soon hopelessly unclassifiable when the computer is turned on, due to the infinite multiplication of possibilities and the abundant confluence of diverse cultures united there. Where are we?

A young man with a "Neymar hairdo" arrives at the Rock Shopping Center in São Paulo, with money counted in crisp notes in his hand, and asks for a "Vans" t-shirt. The ritual is complete when he puts it on, and with one of the most popular brands of the skating world stamped on his chest, leaves the store for the aisles of the shopping center, his expression transformed. Assured, he is now clearly a part of the scene surrounding him, identified as one who has the right clothes in the right place....

Working with the appropriation of images, and painting over materials present in everyday life, such as stamped fabrics and soft objects like towels and blankets, my view is commonly directed to peoples' taste. I observe that in the choices that they make there is a strong relationship between taste and comfort, in a legitimate search driven by the desire for recompense. Believing naively in the common consumer's freedom of choice to surround himself with that which pleases. In this way, I frequent popular stores where people surround themselves with objects for their houses, for their life, stamped with of all types of images. The relationship between taste and comfort, present in everyday visuality, is what most interests me. Being expressed directly, spontaneously and quickly in the sphere of our ultra-consumerist society, this relationship between taste and comfort, which is inevitably Kitsch and "gaudy," ends up being

situated in the antique concept of “beautiful,” from the XIX and XX centuries, much further than any previously-known frontier. The recognition of the new beautiful no longer pertains to any scale of aesthetic beauty, but is connected to specific meanings through which new values are organized.

The appropriation of images is maintained as the attitude inspiring this new set of object-paintings. This “loan” of images and meanings, through the use of printed materials which already have image, color and texture, is a characteristic present in my trajectory since its beginning in the 1980s. However, more recently, feeling the need to change the work, I began to paint over materials generally produced for the world of sport. In addition to images and colors, they have text: the names of teams, players’ numbers, as well as sponsors. The sponsors appear on well-known logos, and there is also the clear presence of the brands that produce these materials.

The frank attitude of the person who cheers, who chooses a sport, be it skateboarding, football, cycling, basketball or tennis. It is a world with its own rules, strong symbols which facilitate the creation of an intense channel of personal identification. After all, it is the team, color and anthem of his idols, duly occupying a place of true heroes. This channel of identification, so strong and secure, will inevitably and simultaneously end up bringing the subject to that which I call “happy consumption,” or “guilt-free consumption.” The objects, which range from the baseball cap, t-shirt and sneakers to the towel, blanket, champion medal, backpack and key ring, among other things, all have the brand of the team or athlete of devotion. In this way, the action of acquisition is justified in a clear and irrevocable manner, thus guaranteeing that this subject can enjoy the pleasures of the relationship already established between consumption and merit, so comfortable and cherished, amply incentivized in our society.

This visibility spreads from the TV channels directly to the streets, generally involved in leisure activities. In this new place of taste and the beautiful some values are inverted. For example, the symbol of the sponsor, which a few years ago was hidden or disguised, is now highlighted, triumphant, occupying spaces with brilliant colors, often loudly contrasting with the shirt color of the

team. Further, brands such as Adidas, Nike and Umbro, independent of design or color, gain meaning associated with ideas of reliability, safety and quality, and attain a mystique invariably connected to consumption. There is a standardized behavior that mass society proposes to this new, happy consumer. My attitude is not exactly critical, nor extolling. Rather, I maintain a concerned observation about the apparent “craziness” and “senselessness” of the nervous need of the subject to see him or herself identified with an image.

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São Paulo, March 2013