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Bitter *Sweet* on the tongue

By Domnick Sorace

Knowing that he'll be able to spare no more than a minute or two, I saunter over and cut to the chase: why do so many works in the biennale relate to family? "Art stands in for the people you love" he replies without hesitation, despite his evident fatigue. "Pliny the Elder illustrates the origins of man-made images with the story of the maid of Corinth. The maid's lover is going on a long, hazardous journey so, before he leaves, she traces the outline of his shadow on the wall." He pauses, scanning the crowd who is perusing his show. "That's how painting was born" he adds. "Humans make images to hold onto what they love and what they are about to lose."

'Scene 17 - Massimiliano Gioni', from Sarah Thornton's 33 Artists in 3 Acts, Granta Books, 2014

Dominick Sorace's photographic series is a tender and sincere homily on intimacy, friendship and multi-faceted loss.

These images give a solemn insight into how the artist navigates his way through love, whether platonic or sexual, and the physical, natural world love occupies. By placing a personal taxonomy on this stripped-back series of photographs, Sorace works through the contradictory feelings ascribed to love: pain and pleasure; loss and gain; bitter and sweet.

For *BitterSweet on the Tongue*, the artist's nomenclature of images is undeclared, creating a succinct series of photographic works intended to present a non-linear narrative to the viewer. Time itself is of concern as Sorace meditates on loss through ageing, death and detachment. This concern is not a fear however: the artist has arrived at an acceptance of life's contradictions and the natural order of things with a wisdom beyond his own years. Sorace has commented that he wished "to represent the idea of loss at rest and the certain type of peacefulness that comes with its acceptance" through the completion of this series.

Agency over sexuality is meditated upon in a number of images. The artist reflects on the societal generalisations and negativity attributed to male-identifying sexuality, capturing the associated sense of shame and subsequent concealment. Concurrently, there is a reflection on how society diminishes a woman's sexuality once she approaches a middle/older age. In a gentle assertion, this generalisation is rejected and the beauty and nature of her sexuality is affirmed.

There is a distinct approach to the artist's focus: a depth of consideration which is made unnervingly incisive by the clean and unenhanced photographic aesthetic. As a cross-disciplinary artist, Sorace takes a meticulous approach to his practice, employing either canvas or camera, regarding every technicality of composition and production. The precision and care he gives to his medium is only surpassed by the consideration and respect Sorace has for his subject. This consideration and respect is borne out of experience. By depicting these people and objects in an ambiguous, open-ended meditation, Sorace allows generous space for the viewer to find connections both palpable and obscure.

Aideen Quirke, 2020

BitterSweet on the Tongue is Domnick Sorace's first solo exhibition in Dublin. Presenting a series of large photographs of the work revolves around identifying universal feelings of desire and loss, the spectrum that exists between them, and their union.

BitterSweet on the Tongue developed naturally within the span of a year, by capturing images within personal environments and of people close to the artist, grouped together due to their common mood and tension; wanting something back that is lost, or close.. but yet not close enough. The photographs have similar elements of subtle lighting, toned down colours, and a safe distance between them and the viewer. Together they produce a guarded atmosphere acting as a defence to their vulnerability, honesty and confrontation.

Their tension and duality were further enhanced by later joining the various images into diptychs, creating a dialogue between them through their opposition. The relationship between the diptychs creates ambiguity, and gains importance as it allows room for the viewers personal experiences to come into play.

Domnick Sorace was born in 1994, Reggio Calabria, Italy, raised between Italy and Malta. He graduated in 2017 with a B.A. First Class (Honours) Degree in Fine Arts from MCAST Institute of Creative Arts, Malta. In the same year he moved to Ireland, where he is currently based as a studio member at The Complex Arts Centre, Dublin. He has exhibited in Malta, Brussels, and recently completed a residency at VISUAL Centre of Contemporary Art, Carlow, Ireland.

Opening Hours

1st Feb 12 - 5 PM

2nd Feb 12 - 5 PM

3rd Feb 10 - 5 PM

4th Feb 10 - 5 PM

5th Feb 10 - 5 PM

6th Feb 10 - 5 PM

 www.domnicksorace.com

 @domnicksorace