

James Beckett & Narcisse Tordoïr, 8 February – 12 March, 2017

Wilfried Lentz is proud to present a double exhibition by James Beckett (b. 1977, lives and works in Amsterdam) and Narcisse Tordoïr (b. 1954, lives and works in Antwerp). The show is a dialogue between new assemblages by Beckett and two very large paintings by Tordoïr. The artists collaborated more than ten years ago, and this is the first time their work has been jointly exhibited since then. Shown together, their current practices communicate on an abstract level, dealing with similar themes of loss and solace but with completely divergent formal expressions.

Tordoïr's paintings are as tall as the gallery space itself and architecturally form a central nave of two parallel spaces. Positioned in these side passages, the works of Beckett are part of an ongoing series titled 'Most Notable Car Deaths', elaborated here to 'The Cray Extensions'.

Beckett's assemblages are based on the death of Seymour Cray, the engineer widely considered the father of supercomputing. Cray died due to injuries sustained in a car accident while driving a Jeep Cherokee in October of 1996. These pieces combine car parts from the same vehicle model, layered with merchandise and artefacts from Cray's research laboratories. In addition, a hobbyist's rendering of the most renowned supercomputer becomes motif for a pyjama velvet—material evocative of the domestic environment in which the enthusiast's version was conceived. The series appear as a random sampling under the odd classification of automotive death, each pursued as a macabre microcosm of modern goings-on.

The two large paintings by Narcisse Tordoïr are inspired by a series of etchings by Giambattista Tiepolo. Tiepolo's artistic practice took place during the Rococo, a time of discord without any common cultural destiny, and one that recalls our current era. The rootless protagonists in Tiepolo's work—magicians, fauns, gods and dogs—wander around in a godforsaken decor of ruins and silent emptiness. In Tordoïr's paintings, these allegoric figures are transformed into people of our time, without direction or purpose, indifferent and self-sufficient in a setting that evokes a world of pollution and destruction.

Beckett's practice typically explores minor histories and is concerned with industrial development (and its subsequent demise). It is a process of investigation that is as much physical as it is biographical. Recent shows include: 56th Venice Biennale, Belgian Pavilion (IT); 5th Thessaloniki Biennale (GR); and ARTSPACE, The Physics Room, Auckland (NZ). He has published two monographs: *Works of James Beckett with Constant Interjections by Frank Key*, TWAAS/Koenig books (US) and *James Beckett*, Kehrer Verlag (DE).

Tordoïr works across a wide range of media and forms, often collaborating with other artists, although the core of his artistic endeavour is painting. Recent (solo) exhibitions include: MHKA, Antwerp (BE); Witte de With, Rotterdam (NL); and Musée Régional de Art Contemporain Languedoc Rousillon, Sérignan (FR).

The opening takes place on Thursday, 9 February from 5–8 pm. The exhibition runs until 12 March, 2017. During Art Rotterdam there are extended opening times: Wednesday, 8 February till Saturday, 11 February from 10am–7pm; Sunday, 12 February from 1pm–7pm.

For further information and visuals, please contact the gallery: office@wilfriedlentz.com or +31(0)104126459.