

## THREE BLIND MICE

Dan colen \_ Nate Lowman \_ Rob Pruitt

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This exhibition presents three artists of different age, each with their own background rooted in different realities, but with a similar artistic attitude: Nate Lowman (°1979), Dan Colen (°1979) and Rob Pruitt (°1964). All three artists are working and living in New York.

As sons of the masters of American art, each of these artists evidences a connection to pop art, elements of minimalism, and influences of *Marcel Duchamp*, *Jean-Michel Basquiat*, *Richard Prince*, *Mark Rothko* and *Andy Warhol*, yet their art is distinctly new. Taking cues from various components of reality, they are focused on the now, and without forgetting the lessons, they nonetheless claim the legacy of the past. Together, these artists represent an interesting perspective on American contemporary art and society.

**Dan Colen** is a downtown New Yorker, which is clearly evidenced in his approach and his use of graffiti and materials such as chewing gum and smashed flowers. For the famous sculpture *Untitled (Vete al Diablo)* (2006), he used graffiti and dropped bird shit on a big menhir-like rock, creating, in this way, a suburban wasteland monument. One of Dan Colen's key concepts is the notion of "Everything and Nothing", a kind of dualism that is always present in his life, wherein the one is seen as opposite and yet equal to the other, much in the way both sense and nonsense are involved in one's process of trying to make sense.

**Nate Lowman** loves language; his work takes its cues from the pop art, from political misconduct, from environmental destruction, from every possible atrocity, from mass consumption. He describes American society with sarcasm and dark humour.

Nate Lowman meditates on the cult of celebrity in America, on the power of weapons and the culture of violence, with its bullet holes and crime scenes. He talks about cruelty and banality and a sense of injustice, but always with smiling irony.

**Rob Pruitt** manages, through his eclectic approach, to shock the public, using irony, visual impact and ambivalence. Some of his famous works include *The Cocaine Buffet*, the glitter panda paintings, the dinosaurs and *101 Art Ideas You Can Do Yourself*.

His concept is that anybody can make art, that there is nothing mysterious to it, that art is accessible; “art is really just about developing a sensitivity to your environment and making comments about the world you’re living in in a beautiful way.” He provides us with a starting point that we can explore and expand upon.

One of the purposes of this exhibition is to bring into dialogue older and new works, to present a progressive line of creativity, make clear how their work evolves over time and how everything permanently changes. This is why the works of the artists are not shown as individual pieces but rather as series, representing a particular period of life, illustrating a particular way of looking at reality.

Every artist is different; even if they share a common artistic attitude, their work takes them in different directions. It is possible to notice similarities, yet the differences between them are even more apparent. Their approach to pop art, their irony, the minimal influences, the concept of “everything and nothing”, and the languages they have developed, are distinctly their own.

The exhibition projects in Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens seek to generate a physical emotion. They aim to create a total experience: the space becomes an all-encompassing installation. The work of each artist is presented in direct dialogue with that of others; from one room to the next, visitors can compare works and taste the differences and similarities between them. Paintings, sculptures and installations are brought together to involve the public in a complete art experience.

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