

STAND HARD - TORA SCHULTZ

Hiding the invisible

There is something brutally playful about the way the works are popping and the force with which Schultz has refurbished the basement space of Bizarro. Four rolls of thick linoleum flooring are erected into geometric forms in an aesthetic mix of modernism and leftovers. On the wall Pinocchio is hanging low, staring without eyes, mouth half open towards the reality that made his nose grow long. Carved out in beech stained pine wood, the figurative face is typical, full of veins although infamously not alive, but glued to a wooden strap-on.

Both Schultz' wooden Pinocchio and her linoleum columns came to life through a reorganization of the method and materials of the Magnus Olesen Series 8000 chair. The Danish modern design made from bent wood and linoleum is often used by institutions and educational spaces at large. Even though it was designed to make people sit equally and in a basic position, the measurements of the chair are taken from the biased data of a male protagonist, awkwarding the bodies of everyone else.

The linoleum columns titled *In Statua* have a soft and marbling surface. They carry the antique references of the now eroded polychromatic painted marble sculptures and temples; an image that we have never sensed other than in reproductions or as they reappear in industrialized, postmodern architecture. From his position on the wall and with 1940 Disney's stupefying expression on his face, the strapped Pinocchio suddenly seems to stare directly into his imaginative, cut off body parts that someone with a similar child-like cruelty teasingly put in front of him. Unable to reach the toy-colored and disproportionate bodies, the rendition of Pinocchio appears as both an object of cultural fetishization and a literal dickhead.

Schultz has an almost ontological approach to the material she works with, dealing with porous and fibrous structural matter, supporting her conception of materiality as bendable, formable, manageable. As the title of the exhibition suggests, Standing hard, or stand-ard, her sculptural practice is concerned with standardizations, visualizing and dismantling the structures and narratives we are placed within, narratives that will inevitably form us. The morphological practice of parting and reorganizing, of extracting an object to carryingly access each and every detail is materialistic and scientific in its surgical approach.

As such STAND HARD is a sculptural critique of power dynamics and the delicate and almost invisible forces that violently put material and bodies into form. How the activity of sculpting becomes internalized in every act of behaving. The exhibition commutes between minimalistic methods and the attraction to the spectacular drama of both collective, institutional and folklorist storytelling. In Schultz' exhibition stories equate and become physical carvings of context and fix points, pointing to the establishment of a world furnished from specific measures, and consequently for specific bodies. Tormented and molded, the show mimics the unbearableness of moving through such an irreconcilable world that does not fit, but continuously keeps on trying.

