

Press information

March 2007

I WANT TO BELIEVE

Mircea Cantor, Roberto Cuoghi, Katharina Fritsch, Runa Islam, Marijn van Kreijl, Sterling Ruby, Danh Vo

cur. by Milovan Farronato

March 3 to April 7, 2007

Opening Friday, March 2, 6 – 8 pm

“I want to believe I can be better”, “I want to believe I can be socially useful”, “I want to believe in human rights”, “I want to believe in peace”, “I want to believe in miracles”, “I want to believe in marriage”... “I want to believe in UFOs”...

These are just some of the phrases we repeat to ourselves more or less consciously every day, and which strengthen the expression of an intention: wanting to believe! This is a lot more decisive compared to the just as frequent “I need to believe”. It would seem that the absolute urgency to believe should be interpreted as a natural consequence of the Cartesian ‘*cogito ergo sum*’ translatable for present purposes as “I believe therefore I am” which thus becomes the direct syllogism: “I believe because I think and therefore I am”.

I Want To Believe expresses a conscious choice, a sentient use of a longing to believe, and a sentient abandonment of critical awareness and speculative outlook. The man who, in humanistic terms, decides to place himself in an eccentric and thus off-centre position, identifies, prefers or decides on a specific concept of spirituality as the fulcrum of his own universe. This is the cold-blooded attitude which does not feed off an iconic heritage handed down over time, and which is not based on the Christian concept of “providence” nor on the Calvinist notion of “grace”. It is an extremely self-aware and individualist choice taken independently by the individual. For lack of a unifying protocol, this devotion opens up to a wide range of redefined possibilities in new aesthetic categories (faith in one’s work, in the occult, in mysticism, superstition, in the transmutation of things, in eternal youth – like those who subject themselves to cryogenic submersion only to re-emerge several centuries later). Personal and unusual rites of initiation which find no place in the collective imagination, in which the subject decides to become also the mystic container.

In the exhibition features **Danh Vo** (“If you were to climb Himalaya tomorrow”) with his work consisting of a glass case housing the carefully laid out objects of profane and material belief, interpreted by the artist in terms of the symbolic value that society usually attributes to them.

Katharina Fritsch's sculptural works ("Wardrobe (White Umbrella)") at once remind us of an image bound up with superstition and thus the consequent decision whether to believe or not in the significance of the situation. **Mircea Cantor** presents a *memento mori* ("Born to be burnt", "Energia") which paradoxically proposes a creed of life and its own form of existential philosophy. **Roberto Cuoghi** wants to believe he can make up for past injustice by digging out and performing an old popular Chinese song ("Mei Gui") a hymn to the coming of spring. **Sterling Ruby** puts together images with a strong physical presence ("Physicalism The Recombine") showing their formal consumption with his belief in the sculptural potential of the material even after it has been maltreated, distorted and altered. **Marijn Van Kreijl** prefers to work with a form of languid sentimentalism ("Get closer to be far away. (Or stay where you are to feel what you are missing)") while **Runa Islam** presents the debut of her video installation "What is a Thought Experiment, Anyhow?", actions and reactions, reflections and explosions through the random game of variables.

Thus faith is no longer a projection, the opium of the people, childish immaturity or in its wider sense a creed to see us through our day-to-day lives, but rather a rational and well-reasoned choice.

For further questions, please contact Thomas Jarek at the gallery.

Opening hours:	Tuesday – Friday	12 noon – 6 pm
	Saturday	11 am – 5 pm

Upcoming exhibition:	Verne Dawson, April 13 to May 26, 2007
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