

juliette jongma  
girard doustraat 128a  
NL - 1073 VX amsterdam  
T/f +31(0)20 463 69 04  
info@juliettejongma.com  
www.juliettejongma.com

Karen Sargsyan  
Dialogue between green and blue  
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Do you remember playing the zero-sum hand game 'Rock, Scissor, Paper'? And being beaten by someone uplifting his hand palms symbolizing paper, while you automatically made a fist, symbolizing the assumed power of a rock? If so; you could probably understand the symbolic strength of a piece of paper. A pacifist tool; that both literally and figuratively moves within time and space, away from fixed grounds.

Karen Sargsyan's paper based theatrical sculptures uphold this notion of the material, and visualize mythopoeia\*-like mise-en-scènes based upon the (brutal) archetypes of (recent) history and mythology.

In a similar manner of collaging his narratives, Sargsyan creates layers of cut out bits and pieces of paper, resulting in surrealistic figures that are reminiscent of tribal artefacts, such as masks or costumes. The figures symbolize strong emotions, yet enact their narratives in a rather fragile, absurd and elegant manner due to the artists' delicate and detailed use of forms and colours.

Throughout Sargsyan's fourth solo exhibition at Galerie Juliette Jongma the artist has set out a sculptural, and apocalyptic trilogy of different material settings, entitled as an exhibition 'A Dialogue between Green and Blue'. Sargsyan has used the colours within his works in various manners, and aims at creating a philosophical dialogue between the green and blue to permeate a deep emotional state amongst its viewers.

The artist begins his epos by presenting the current conflicting times as a stream of echoes of individual ideologies. Here a large group of figures are positioned on different heights within the space. The suggested noisy place - where nobody listens or is being heard - is enhanced by the frustrated poses of the protagonists, who use their whole body to emphasize their voice. This catastrophic state of total disharmony, is followed by a kinetic, or robotic piece of figures that solely interact on the level of practicalities, and miss out on any emotional connection.

Surprisingly the final piece turns this pessimistic prelude into a utopian apotheosis of total harmony. A happy end; captured in thin layers of aluminium that mimic the characteristics of the paper, and fortify its conservation in the manner of material, and hope for humanity.

The use of aluminium is a first step for Sargsyan to further develop works for the public, and outdoor sphere. A new direction, that allows the artist to maintain the scissor-cut delicacy, and the

vivid attitude of the material, while having the works exposed to the elements outside of the white cube.

Sargsyan's artistic practice originates from a self trained, obsessive interest in the artificial translation of the human body. An obsession that is interestingly expressed by him switching from the art- to the sports academy in his early years, before attending the Rijksakademie in 2006. Ever since he has had exhibitions at Bob van Orsow, Zürich (2008), the Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art (2009), Groninger Museum (2011), DordtYart (2014), and his work was part of the 2015 Moscow Biennial amongst many other group and solo exhibitions. This year Sargsyan will be an artist in residence at the Auckland Print Studio in Auckland, NZ.

\* **Mythopoeia** is a narrative genre in modern literature and film where a fictional or artificial mythology is created by the writer of prose or other fiction.

Text by Jeanine Hofland

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