

Brice Dellsperger



AIR DE PARIS

Brice Dellsperger

Born in 1972 in Cannes.
Lives and works in Paris.

Since 1995, Brice Dellsperger has been remaking sequences from cult films for his ongoing series Body Double. The artist interprets all the characters, both male and female through a process of cross-dressing that implies a questioning of gender, originality and artifice.

«The transvestites in my films are fantastic creatures, the kind I'd like to meet more often in everyday life. Cinema uses costume in all its forms, and it is itself a travesty of reality in its act of reproduction, in the illusion it generates. Cinema is an artifice, so it's the perfect receptacle for my experiments in cross-dressing and gender play. I see it as an extension of the realm of film, a doubling of fiction» - BD

He has participated in numerous exhibitions at the Centre Pompidou (2023), La galerie Centre d'art, Noisy-le-Sec (2022); Palais de Tokyo (2017); Haus der kunst, Munich (2017); Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris (2017); MACBA (2016); Maison des Arts, Malakoff (2016); Musée des Beaux-Arts de Tours (2015); MAC VAL (2015); Nouveau Musée National de Monaco (2014); CAPC, Bordeaux (2012); Kunstverein, Dusseldorf (2009); MAMAC, Nice (2008); Le Magasin, Grenoble (2006); Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Strasbourg (2003).

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Centre National des Arts Plastiques - CNAP, Paris, France
FRAC Alsace, Sélestat, France
FRAC Poitou-Charentes, Angoulême
FRAC PACA, Marseille, France
FRAC Aquitaine, Bordeaux, France
FRAC Limousin, Limoges, France
FNAC, Centre National des Arts Plastiques, Paris La Défense, France
Goetz Collection, Media Art, Munich, Allemagne
MoMA, Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA
NMNM, Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, Monaco
Sammlung Goetz, Munich, Allemagne
Bambi Foundation, Tel Aviv, Israël



Exhibition views: *Jalousies*, Dortmunder Kunstverein, Dortmund, 2024



Exhibition views: *Jalousies*, Dortmunder Kunstverein, Dortmund, 2024

Solitaires, Air de Paris, Romainville, France

20.06 – 30.07.23

Aerobics were the fashion in the 80s!

Studies on the postmodern body in contemporary American society are linked to the context of the 80s, a period which recognized an ideal body-object caught up by the AIDS epidemic. The identification of the HIV virus had a major influence on the perception and representation of bodies and sexuality.

The movie sequence on which Body Double 36 is based is the one in the gym class. The story is reduced to a minimum, gestures and looks are evocative, here we witness a true symbiosis between bodies, a perfect synchronism while playing the pseudo hit Shock Me, in a pure moment of collective experience similar to an orgasm. Different types are represented, but strangely they get mixed up, which according to me might well define a new Trans identity.

Today's Trans-body should be paying tribute to the fitness activity of the 80s! To its ambiguity, its bodily transformations, the transgression of bodies augmented and sculpted through personal accomplishment.

Subjects are staged and represented in a new installation. Using mirrors and enlargements like a kaleidoscope, the sequence is doubled several times. I invited artist Jean Biche, who performed at the Manko Cabaret in Paris, to interpret all the characters.

- Brice Dellsperger, 2019

A woman visits a psychiatrist, but she has a hidden agenda. Likewise, the therapist is not all that he appears to be; he listens to the analysis with concern but also with an underlying, almost sinister, sense of lust. The scene is from Brian DePalma's *Dressed to Kill*, in which nothing is as it appears, and in which its protagonists role-play, play-act and dress-up. A perfect text, then, to serve as the template for Brice Dellsperger's Body Double 37.

This poetic and politicized artwork, slyly masquerading as an entertaining video clip, is made following Dellsperger's preferred style. The artist has detached the soundtrack from a four-minute segment of the 1980 film, using it as the structure, or prompt, to propel his own investigation into identity, the self and its representation. Dellsperger inhabits the poses of Michael Caine and of Nancy Allen, manipulating his gestures and contorting his body to mimic these cinematic ideals.

But Dellsperger's work is not solely a garment worn to conceal and/or decorate the body. It is not a cloak. It is also an organ internal to that body. Like breath, the voice in Dellsperger's work inhabits the artist's insides; he becomes the medium reactivating the spirits of decades long past.

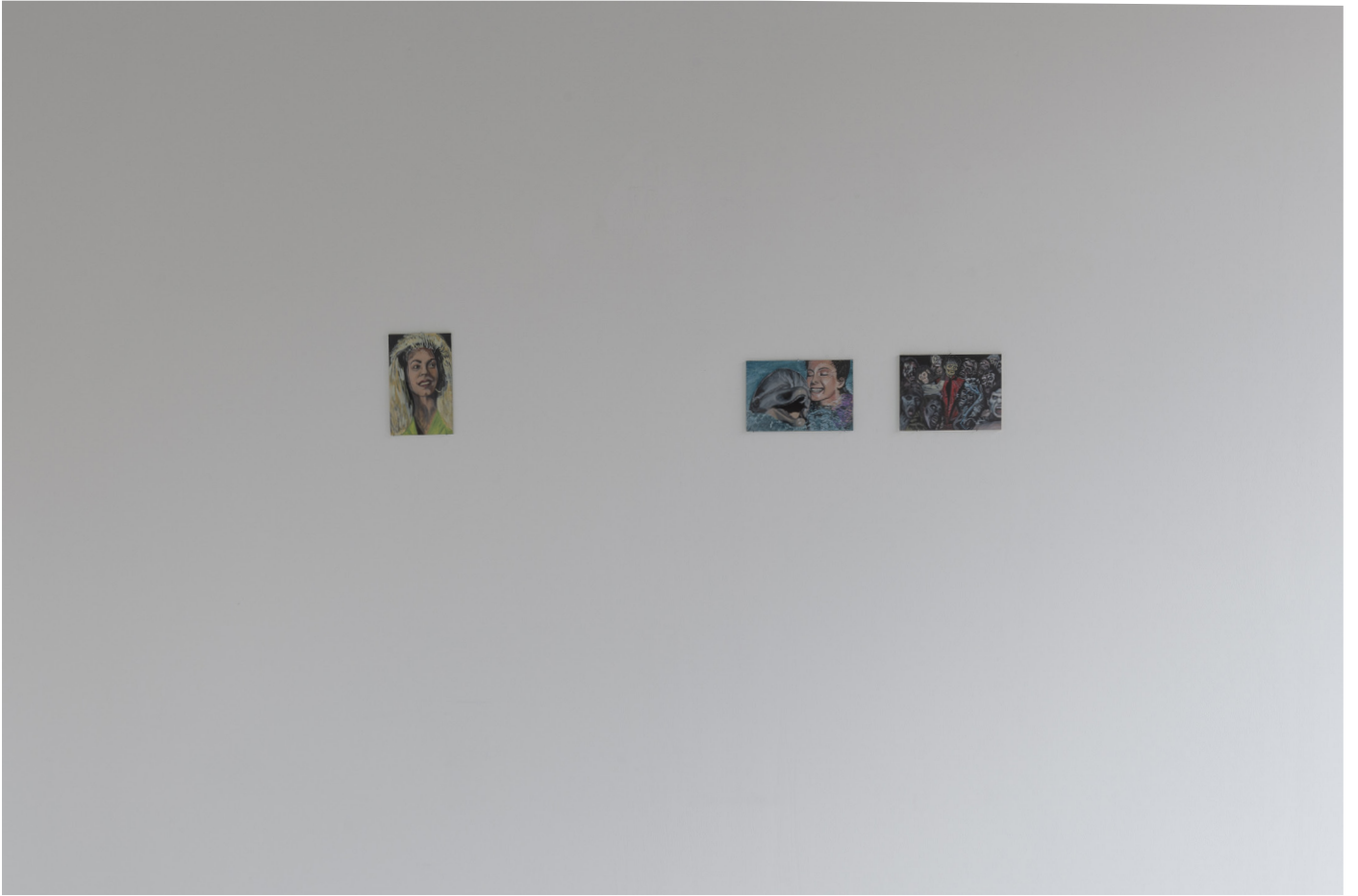
What we see is Dellsperger's present — his self in the Covid-infected 2020. What we hear is Dellsperger's past — his teenaged memory of the feverish style and violent ruptures of DePalma's halcyon days. We could say these are the depicted and the uttered, however, nothing could be further from the truth, for Body Double 37 creates a meaning that is thoroughly independent of the scene from *Dressed to Kill* that acts as its inspiration. Dellsperger's art is one of total transformation; the original is slain and, in its place, is a perfectly fused synthesis of oppositional forces.

So, for the time being dear viewer, let's slip into something a little more comfortable and press play.

- José Freire, 2020



Exhibition views: **Solitaires**, Air de Paris, Romainville, 2020



Exhibition views: **Solitaires**, Air de Paris, Romainville, 2020

L'âge du double, La Station, Nice, France

03.07 – 28.09.19

Gathering several films in the Body Double series, as well as work archives (reference movie posters, storyboards, drawings, paintings, photographs), L'âge du double shows the various sides composing the kaleidoscopic universe of this video maker.

Brice Dellsperger's work concentrates on a review of some cinema moments, in particular of the 70s and 80s: Carrie, Passion, Blow Out, Basic Instinct, Clockwork Orange, ... The generic title of the Body Double series is actually a reference to the eponymous film by Brian de Palma released in 1984.

The remake or the cover phenomenon as a genre in itself consists in staging, re-interpreting a story, a text, a scenario, identically. A characteristic example, Psycho by Gus Van Sant (1998) remakes shot by shot the original version directed by Hitchcock in 1960. With Brice Dellsperger, the cover works more like a « forged » copy or a quotation: the artist only respects in part the original work from which he gets his inspiration and thus emancipates from too cinephile of a vision of the exercise.

The artist only takes interest in the most iconic clips of the movies he selects, thus producing short format videos: the shower scene in Carrie, the questioning in Basic Instinct, the orgy in Eyes Wide Shut... A pop repertoire providing the artist with an endless source of clichés and stereotypes.

Body Double 36, he has been directing at Villa Arson for the exhibition Fucking Perfect, takes over the famous aerobic session, exuding lycra and sexual tension, played by Jamie Lee Curtis and John Travolta in the movie Perfect (1985).

The movies Body Double are systematically made with stand-ins and voice over. Thanks to special effects – consisting, in particular, with embedding and duplicating the actors in a fix set, sometimes disturbing the scale ratio – the cover flips into an assumed artificiality. Only the soundtrack remains sometimes identical to the original one and if so, the actors mime the dialogues trying to comply with the elocution and the rhythm of the speech. This lip-sync principle is a direct echo to the drag-queens' universe, who, in their shows, outrageously reproduce emblematic pop culture songs.

Except on rare occasions, the clip chosen was replayed by a transvestite actor assuming all the male and female characters. By blurring the line between genres, Brice Dellsperger quotes once again the drag and trans scene but signs mostly an aesthetic position. By repetition and abrupt changes, the acting, performative and split, disturbs the notion of identity in its undividable and consubstantial characteristic.

The notions of genre and sex, here dealt with through the prism of the mirror and repetition, opens onto a field of iconoclast questioning of the popular codes of representation. Through the use of artifice, fragmentation and splitting, Brice Dellsperger shatters the unity of the filmic work so, in fine, he frees himself from cinematographic paradigms.



Exhibition views: *L'âge du double*, La Station, Nice, 2019



Exhibition views: L'âge du double, La Station, Nice, 2019

Body Double, Marsèlleria, Milan, Italie

23.10 – 30.11.18

Curator: Selva Barni

The source of the artist's research is cinema, used as material to manipulate, recreate, subvert. *Body Double* takes its name from Brian De Palma's eponymous 1984 movie and synthesizes the conceptual and physical articulations of Dellsperger's work. In this series, he, often actor-performer, Jean-Luc Verna or other actors, remake sequences of cult movies (De Palma, Hitchcock, Kubrick, Lynch, van Sant, Zulawski), playing all roles, masculine and feminine, and lip-sync original dialogues. In multiple, disorienting incarnations that question the artifice of cinema and issues of gender. While interlocking practices of appropriation and re-enactment, and mirroring the relationships between couples like author-viewer, subject-object, desire-representation, filming-editing.

The use of drag and camp, of the utterly artificial, the imperfections, the glitches, loops and duplications, destabilize the conventions of cinema and representation, and question the ways in which we project ourselves onto others – and ultimately represent ourselves. Addressing also the ordinary, overarching presence in our lives of the self-portrait, the backbone of imagination, and the construction of the self, in the age of social networks.



Vue d'exposition: *Body Double*, Marsèlleria, Milan, 2018



Exhibition views: **Body Double**, Marsèlleria, Milan, 2018



Nude at a glance, gouache on paper, 12,5 x 12,5 cm, 2017

Fire Queen, gouache on paper, 12,5 x 12,5 cm, 2017



Bubbles in zombies, gouache on paper, 28 x 12,5 cm, 2020

Angie said : «Meet me at the Met» featuring Alex Katz and Tom Palmore, gouache on paper, 13,5 x 23 cm, 2019



Location Photograph (Woman on the balcony), framed Ilfochrome print on aluminium, 31,2 x 25 cm, 2010



Location Photograph (Victor), framed Ilfochrome print on aluminium, 31,2 x 25 cm, 2010



Body Double 38, Film 2k Apple ProRes 422, color, sound, 6 min. 43 sec., loop, 2022



Body Double 35, 2K film, 16:9 letterbox, ProRes 422 file, color, sound, 4 min. 39 sec., loop, 2017

Body Double 34, three films, H264 to Apple ProRes 422 HQ, 5 min 6 sec., loop, 2015



Body Double 22, video projection. DVCPR050 to digital Betacam, color, sound, 37min., loop, 2017

Body Double 17, video-projection, DV to Digital Betacam, color, sound, 16.27 min, loop, 2001