

Johannes Bendzulla *You're Fired*

October 22 - December 4, 2016

Brennan & Griffin is pleased to present "You're Fired," an exhibition of new works by Düsseldorf based artist Johannes Bendzulla.

For his second exhibition at the gallery, Bendzulla has crafted a series of works on panel. Seven compositions, made by collaging and stapling various digitally printed material onto wooden panels, play with ideas revolving around authenticity and the multiplicity of labor. The modern structure of artistic labor (independence, innovative personal branding, the collapse between work and "free" time) is put into conversation with the desired attributes of the contemporary entrepreneur.

Bendzulla's compositions are a mashup of the natural and artificial, as exemplified by intricate renderings of emotionally expressive androids and Photoshop sprayed graffiti on fake brick walls. The digitally constructed imitations of emotion and expression are a constant of Bendzulla's practice. In this exhibition they humorously point to the ambivalence of the multifaceted arts professional. Each panel is layered with photo wallpaper and quickly stapled transparent foils, referencing built-up posters and flyers one encounters in the streets of nearly every metropolis.

In "Accident," the natural versus artificial is enacted through the collision of a dinosaur and a car, referencing the quote "distinct or extinct" by famed management guru Tom Peters. Similar mottos weave in and out of the foreground of other works, reinforcing the anxiety of performance expectations in the workplace. The repeating brick wall motif refers to the concept of the loft, or repurposed factory buildings attempting to emit a casual or rustic atmosphere thought to be conducive to inspiration and productivity. This aesthetic approach can also be seen in cafes, start-up offices and condominiums as an attempt to feign authenticity.

The work "Natural Selection" features an image of a robot reluctantly picking flowers, encapsulating the rational/natural dichotomy found in Bendzulla's work. The artist makes light of the fear that technology will eventually overtake the need for human involvement in industry. To quell these anxieties Bendzulla over-humanizes the robotic figures, placing them in leisurely activities like painting and picking flowers. What is the worth of authentic creative labor when humans become obsolete?

Johannes Bendzulla (b. 1984 in Saarbrücken, Germany) lives and works in Düsseldorf, Germany. He graduated from the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, Germany in 2012 and received his Master of Fine Art from the Academy of Media Arts Cologne. Recent exhibitions include: *I love my job*, Parkhaus, Düsseldorf (Solo, 2015), *Is This THIS That?*, Greene Exhibitions, Los Angeles, (2015), *Part One: Spring 2015 - En Plein Air* and *Part Two: Arctic Winter - VS - The Warmth Emitted By Your Computer Screen*, Natalia Hug Gallery, Cologne (Both solo, 2015), *Whose Subject Am I?*, Kunstverein Düsseldorf, Germany (2015), *No More Business As Usual*, Ve.sch, Vienna, Austria (2014), *Dismantling Creativity*, Galerie BRD, Hamburg, Germany (2013).