

ANDRÉ TRINDADE
I'm a mineralist
20.03.14 – 09.05.15

*Here's a shocking revelation for you voyeurs
Such a heinous deviation, there are no cures
I'm a mineralist, I'm a mineralist*

Nick Mason, I'm A Mineralist, 1981

I'm a minimalist, no sorry, I'm a *mineralist* – yes, I am. Who said, or rather sang, this was Robert Wyatt on Nick Mason's album Fictitious Sports (1981). The lyrics sang in a monotonous voice over a background of constant music, co-produced and written by Carla Bley, play with the minimalism of Philip Glass, Eric Satie and John Cage. It is music about music, based on a cultural phenomena: minimalism. The reference to the Nick Mason album in the title of André Trindade's exhibition suggests reflexivity in relation to his own field of action.

André Trindade's minimalism can be summed up by the captions: all works are *untitled*, unifying a group of objects which bear witness to his 'heinous deviation'. He is the *mineralist* par excellence, obsessed with constructing art works that reveal themselves as *fictions*, recalling props from a science-fiction film taking place in the near future, narrating the art history of the 1960s in flashbacks.

The works are assemblages, accumulations of found objects, organized in different groups. Aerial and landscape photographs (collages) instigate associations with the landscape formed by the objects Trindade presents horizontally in the gallery. A box, appearing as a horizontal frame, is filled with debris and animal bones, its heterogenic content made uniform by monochrome paint. The pictorial act becomes even more evident in a plinth, also installed horizontally, which serves as a surface for finger-painting, refined –like the debris and animal bone objects – by glossy varnish, creating a feeling of strangeness, a tension between the banality of the objects and the appearance of their surfaces.

The *mineralist's* collection obviously extends to minerals, which are false and only at first sight can be seen to illustrate the exhibition's title. The minerals are revealed to be as common rocks in disguise, painted, resulting in a simulated preciousness, recalling current discussion on the recently declared geological era of the Anthropocene, an attempt to define the current epoch of our planet as one in which man has finally become the most influential factor in biological, atmospheric and geological processes.

One of the central works of the exhibition is a sculpture made of iron, built by Trindade from numerous small metal plates welded together, the visible welding seams resulting constructive ornamentation on the rusty surface. The sculpture recalls a Golem, an animated anthropomorphic creature from Jewish folklore, created magically from the unanimated material.

The strange aura of this work reinforces this line of association, because the shapes of the sculpture appear to be waiting to be joined in an apparently correct order by the right person, who is able to give life to the inanimate matter. The Golem has been part of our visual imagination since 1915, when the German directors Paul Wegener and Heinrich Galeen created a film with the same title. The plot is based on a clay figure found when a deep well was being dug in the Jewish neighbourhood of Prague and which became animated after being exposed to a magic spell. Along this line, the clay figure of the Golem in the film is transmuted into moulds for the metal shapes that constitute Trindade's work, presented to voyeurs (us, the viewers) as a cadaver on a dissection table.

Nick Mason inspired the title of the exhibition, but the soundtrack for Andre Trindade's 'film props' derive from a collaboration with Manuel Mesquita, which is made available to the public on a multiple-format tape – two relics from the 1960s –, the packaging again evoking a crystalline (mineral) form. The collaborations that André Trindade uses and the elimination of a 'contemplative distance' in relation to the objects evoke different notions of authorship and theatricality in the presentation of art.

Slavoj Žižek has drawn a distinction between subjective and objective violence. The first is the violence we recognize easily as brutal acts of war or violent acts of one person against another. The notion of Žižek's objective violence requires a change of perspective and is divided between the symbolic violence of language – its forms of social domination and imposition on the creation of meaning – and 'systemic' violence, the catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of political and economic systems. *I'm a Mineralist* is an exhibition derived from this objective violence: the violence of this kind of text, claiming authority for introducing meaning into the exhibition in question; or the participation of art in the violence inherent to political and economic systems, in which, in order not to lose its relevance, it is condemned to participate.

Jürgen Bock, March 2015