

Jaune & Slinkachu

Trash Talk

June 1 - June 22, 2019

(Los Angeles, CA) - Thinkspace is pleased to present *Trash Talk* featuring new works by internationally renowned artists and street interventionists, Jaune, from Belgium, and Slinkachu, from the UK. Both critically acclaimed artists work on an atypically miniaturist scale, especially given the monumental standard demanded of public art in the deafening context of the city. Jaune and Slinkachu both challenge this paradigm of scale while incorporating the city's refuse and garbage into their imagery as materials and themes. Jaune, with his ingeniously tiny, stenciled, fluorescent-clad city workers, turned agents of anarchic chaos and mischief, and Slinkachu, with his push pin-scaled plastic figures absurdly proposed in microscopic dioramas, turned abandoned public art installations. In a world overrun by accumulation and waste, both Jaune and Slinkachu consider our vulnerability, both accidental and conspired, in a city subsumed by trash.

Each artist brings a uniquely site-responsive approach to their introjections into existing city landscapes. Jaune, responding to the specific conditions of place while calling attention to its often overlooked recesses, and Slinkachu incorporating macro views of our world into the miniature vistas of his own. Both also respond to the collective social tendency to shut down perceptually and visually when caught in the fray of the city's frenetic, alienating, and often existentially exhausting pace. Disrupting this tendency to cultivate inattention, both Jaune and Slinkachu engage city streets all over the world with the unexpected, staging surprise encounters on an almost invisible scale to spark curiosity and renew personal interest within the overwhelmed and desensitized city.

Belgian stencil artist Jaune has established himself internationally through an emblematic cast of tiny mutinying city sanitation workers ingeniously, and often hilariously albeit absurdly, integrated into the urban landscape. Using trompe l'oeil techniques, Jaune's paintings and installations incorporate miniature stenciled figures made from four to six stencil layers and multiple applications of color. The destructive and often lawless behavior of these "mini dudes" as would-be city saboteurs seems to suggest something more sinister and foreboding than their innocuous scale might initially suggest. Jaune's brightly, fluorescent-clad workers quite literally intervene in the architectural locations chosen by the artist, activating the environment itself in illusionistic and situational ways. Always seizing upon moments of tension and potential in the actions posited, Jaune proposes open-ended narratives for the viewer to complete, and questions the visibility of action in a city conditioned by avoidance.

London-based artist Slinkachu creates and photographs miniature public art installations in his ongoing series, *The Little People Project*, began in 2006. Staged and assembled from little train set figures the artist has remodeled and painted, these incredibly Lilliputian sculptural scenarios incorporate everyday objects and castaway materials as props, here a bottle cap boat, there a toy car crushed by a lollipop. He then shoots the tableaux, bringing these minute protagonists to life through incredible macro photography and then "abandoning" them into the landscape, left somewhat poetically to the onslaught of urban entropy and human destruction. Equal parts sculpture, installation, street art, and photography, Slinkachu's funny yet microscopically poignant works are about the discovery of the unexpected on an unlikely scale, but their compelling absurdity also stirs a melancholic current belied by their diminutive size: they, like us, are dwarfed and forgotten by indifferent surroundings.

Trash Talk will feature individual works by both Jaune and Slinkachu, as well as collaborative pieces, new editions, and site-specific interventions in the streets of Los Angeles.

Sean Mahan

Translucent Vision

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Concurrently on view in the Thinkspace project room are new works by Florida-based artist Sean Mahan in *Translucent Vision*. A painter known for his graphically stylized take on social realism, Mahan creates sweetly nostalgic portraits and illustrative renderings of children, incorporating vintage objects and motifs to explore an idea of cultural obsolescence through the fetishization of symbols and references drawn from bygone eras. With interest in the socializing dimensions of culture and consumption, Mahan encourages the viewer to critically reconsider their preconceptions and engagement with the mores that physically determine not only our ways of seeing but our potential for growth and more substantive existences. Mahan also seeks the innately good and redemptive in the human, drawing from both hopeful and melancholic reserves in his imagery.

Fascinated and disconcerted by the mediation and experiential dispossession that dominates our encounters with the world, especially given our pathological reliance on digitally mitigated forms of communication, Mahan considers the sociocultural fallacies of this 'progress' and its ultimate role in shaping and structuring our experience at best, and atrophying it in confinement at worst. *Translucent Vision* explores this idea of a more mutable, cooperative, and plastically referential framework, in place of a confining one.

Each painting in the new series is executed on a vintage piece of fabric, part of a collection amassed over some time by the artist. Once itself the product of commercial mass manufacture and popular tastes, the found substrate is transformed, re-contextualized, and returned to the world as a singular object. Transformed by the artist's intervention into an original gesture rather than a cultural artifact, these works suggest both reclamation and loss through their metamorphosis.