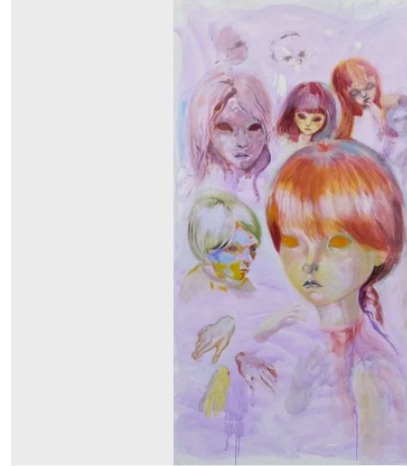
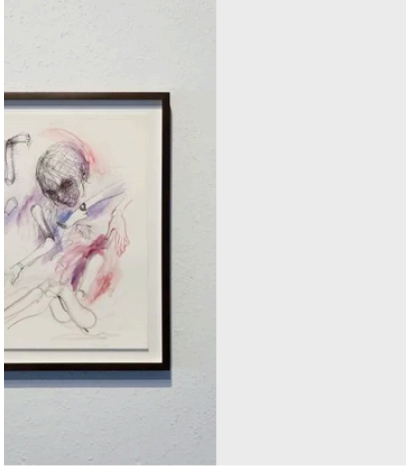


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[MARCH 28 2023]



IN CONVERSATION WITH WILL SHELDON

DETACHED BY WILL SHELDON

HEIDI, BERLIN UNTIL APRIL 15TH, 2023.

INTERVIEW BY KATJA HORVAT

KATJA HORVAT : At what point in your life did you start drawing out your ideas/thoughts?

WILL SHELDON: Both my mom and grandmother are painters actually, and I started drawing because of them. I still do it because I like it, but I grew up in China, and we would go to my grandma's house in North Carolina for any school break and there is not much to do in NC except go to the mall, so what my grandma would do is put a stack of paper in front of me and tell me to draw... so I would.

Katja Horvat: Detached, very on point title for the show.

WILL SHELDON: Very! What we see are a bunch of detached heads, hands, feet, etc..

Katja Horvat: How do you see it, though?

WILL SHELDON: I see it almost as a forgery of an identity, and detaching yourself from yourself. When I was younger, I would copy other people's handwriting, and it made me feel like I was outside of myself. I was able to be someone else, or to live through someone else, which I always wanted to do. With this show, I came close to that feeling again.

Katja Horvat: There are many characters that appear in the drawings, some recurring and front center, and then some could almost just be seen as a noise in a background.

WILL SHELDON: There are always more characters inside of a sketch. It's all very broad, and it also goes from babies to random adults to self-portraits. I am trying not to think of characters, but of simulations. There are also a few houses, which came from me trying to tell some sort of story of where these characters could live. I am not even fully sure myself.

Katja Horvat: Where does this idea of houses come from?

WILL SHELDON: The idea for the houses came from the book I really like — *Jerk* by Dennis Cooper. There is one version of the book with Nayland Blake' puppets and one with Gisèle Vienne' puppets, both amazing. The book is based on a serial killer Dean Corll, and his teenage accomplices David Brooks and Elmer Wayne Henley, who all lured little kids/teenagers to Corll's house, tortured and murdered them.

Katja Horvat: Detached feels like your most personal show yet.

WILL SHELDON: It feels personal and vulnerable to me as well.

Katja Horvat: Ideas of Simulacra are a constant in your work.

WILL SHELDON: I like this idea of the simulacra and the possibility for real adventure within the spectrum. Plus, simulation knows no bounds or morals, and can achieve what I can't.

Katja Horvat: Slavoj Žižek once said, "As soon as we renounce fiction and illusion, we lose reality itself; the moment we subtract fictions from reality, reality itself loses its discursive-logical consistency."

WILL SHELDON: I like this! I personally think fiction and imagination can bring me closer to an understanding of how I feel about things in real life.

Photos by Mizuki Tachibana