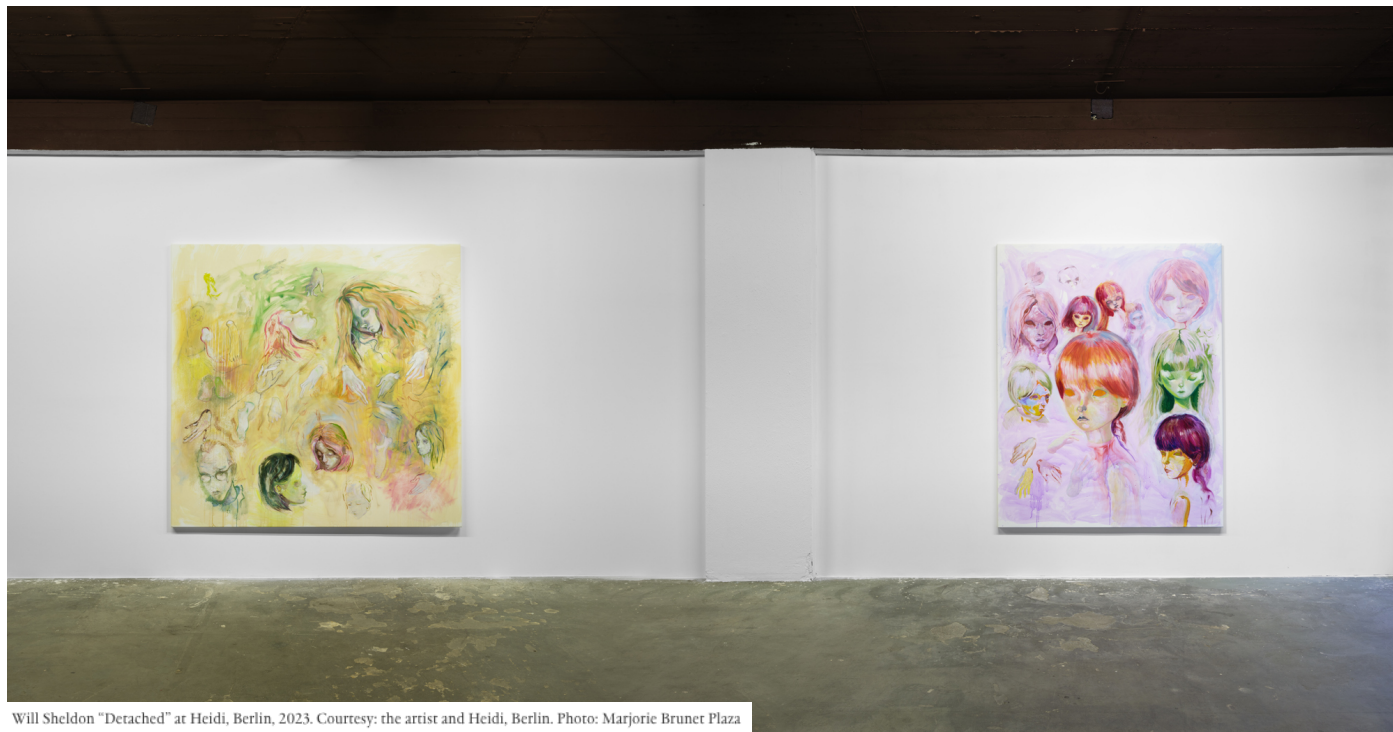


Will Sheldon "Detached" at Heidi, Berlin

27.03.2023

READING TIME 2'

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Will Sheldon "Detached" at Heidi, Berlin, 2023. Courtesy: the artist and Heidi, Berlin. Photo: Marjorie Brunet Plaza

Perhaps what this is all about is a disguised account of Will Sheldon's interiority. But it has been complexified with separate narratorial levels, with a disorienting overlapping of perspectives and representations that undermines the process of recognition or identification proper to the autobiographical reading.

Body parts are detached here—which is usually characteristic of studies, in the like of Eugene Delacroix—but so are affections; cynicism has been added into it all. There is something also akin to Pierre Klossowski's take on the simulacrum. There is no distinction between reality and its depiction anymore.

The ambivalence, made of attraction and repulsion that is so typical of Sheldon's work, cleaves the subjects: characters are thus "divided" (or detached?)—between a quantity of sentiments that their environments send back to them, to us. We're witnessing a forgery; a forgery of identity/ies by means of a fanatical repetition of modicums. Through their prismatic selves, we can only access a blurred vision of the painter's essence.

However, even if everything is detached, everything coheres in an intimism a la Edouard Vuillard or Pierre Bonnard. Some domestic scenes and familiar faces can be discerned in these works. The depiction of light, the use of color, and the apprehension of perspective are also in similitude with the ones of the movement.

Will Sheldon is showing us the clandestine, the confidential entry, the escape hatch, maybe even the key to understanding his work. This mix of mediums (paintings and drawings, oils and crayons); this mix of techniques (departing from the airbrush to probe the classical paintbrush); this mix of subject matters he has been obsessing over to this day (from the BJDs and the portraits, to the architectural elements); this sensible attempt to make a painting of his drawings; these different chronicles; everything, he is covertly and reservedly trying to show us everything, all of the confidential and personal. This is a potlach ¹, he detached a piece of himself, what a beautiful offering!

at Heidi, Berlin
until April 15, 2023