The Plunk'd Venue: Louis Osmosis interviewed by Small Man

Seriality, overperformance, and excess amass into a bad anthropology.

Shame on you...You crack a stupid little smile, you little pip. Go learn to play. Go learn to play...you're FLAT! You can't even carry a fucking note. I don't care about your little, like, horn lip-it doesn't mean that you know how to play. You're FLAT! I'm trained classically, I'm trained contemporaneously, and you suck.

-Small Man

Small Man

Yeah stop...How dare you ruin it for everybody else? Get out! No, no, you go! I'm not going anywhere shithead! Get the fuck out of my neighborhood! GET OUT!

Louis Osmosis

Actually, I went to school just up the block. Before this space was a gallery, it was a Patagonia store, and before that, it was CBGB. So the timeline basically goes from leather collars, to fleece collars, to white collars (laughs). John Varvatos next door still has a lot of the original CBGB ephemera littered across its walls and throughout its space—"cultural preservation" is a great way to save on renovation costs. And not having to clean up after some imagined punkers is great, too. When I was originally approached to do a show here, I was reluctant at first since anything punk or punk-adjacent is really corny but it also felt remiss to not address it. Then I thought that the historical surplus of this space would be a great way to go about site-specificity sans its usual flavor of researched historicity and appraisal. Like an approach to site that's more akin to playing in mud and coming up with a sandcastle. Somewhere between improv and inoculation.

SM

You're no artist. Stop, you're a mediocre piece of shit who can't even play–you suck. I been playing 41 years, you suck. I'm a left handed guitarist, you suck! NO! No. NO! You go–get the fuck out! GET THE FUCK OUT!

LO

You know, funny enough, I'm left-handed, too—not a guitarist though, so you got me there. There's also that thing people say about left-handed people dying 9 years earlier than our right-handed counterparts. My father had tried to correct my left-handedness when I was younger, probably because of that superstition. Left-hands are good for smoking cigarettes, pointing at things in the distance, and idle finger tapping. Right-hands are good for shaking other ones, the assholes of puppets, and slapping things in affirmation. And when the exchange of hands flurries into a collective game of cat's cradle is when ambidexterity finds its rightful poster child. And poster children always bring with them a bag of "we's."

SM

GET OUT! FUCK...YOU! Fucking asshole. Get out-where are you from?!

LO

The immortal cold pizza-how many times can something be preserved, thawed, [have its books] cooked and still manage to perform? It makes me think that redundancy and/or perversion is the only way by which things can attain life. Or more precisely, recast life in "sillier" lights-spotlights without their conspicuous hard edges in favor of diffuse white bruises. "The subject poses as an object in order to be a subject," writes Craig Owens. What if the poser literally made objects, too? (laughs again).

SM

Where are you from? Go to a studio and rehearse! Maybe someday you'll learn–YOU SUCK! You're a no talent piece of shit! You're a poser and you act tough, you don't ask anybody around you whether they wanna hear it or not...get OUT! How dare you come down and do this? I'm here 14 years, I've lived in this town my whole life. You're a disgrace! You SUCK!

LO

Posers are a great litmus test for what supposedly constitutes actual participation. The thing with these lumpenfans is they tend to disturb a scene in a way that spurs its "vetted" participants to reenact their doctrines, with every performative iteration only serving to further ossify themselves. Seriality is good to initiate a game of iSpy or Spot-the-Difference, and even better at exhausting or jeopardizing a form. So what if we consider the poser as a sort of paper-architect? Or a paper-curator? Or a paper-dramaturg? Or a paper-Mr. Bean? If the poser's object attachment is to always be interrogated, plundered, and dramatized as a deficit, then as a reproductive and archival mode it could work to interject its own twisted brand of mise-en-abyme; the "inadequacy" produced by their metabolizing of a culture can thus be a framework towards unraveling the "presumptive solidity of their object," in the words of Lauren Berlant. I'd like to think that these misnomers and corpsed objects could erroneously animate these scenes of deadedness, whereby every bastard relic can be understood as a moment of affected improv in the mise-en-scène (farts). Whereby the compositional nature here reeks of bad seeds and failed afterlives.

SM

Who the hell do you think you are? Who the hell do you think you are? You any kind of artist? Anybody know who you are? Maybe everybody else wants to enjoy the peace and quiet...This is one of the most important places in all of North America—who are you?...WHO ARE YOU?!

LO

I'm adjacent to importance. Or...importantly, adjacent to things of import. There's so many adjacencies to import, with nothing in between but themselves. Like how first chairs precede their orchestras. Repositories, morgues–same thing. Monoliths anticipate Rube Goldberg machines. Family outings read like a genealogy of red. Art openings resemble glee clubs or the dead of night.

SM

You miserable, presumptuous, no talent...you're no artist. An artist respects the silence; it serves the foundation of creativity. You obviously don't have the talent. You don't have enough respect for yourself or other people, or what it is to express yourself...in music, or any other form of creativity. And I'm a NYU film school graduate...sucker! And the School of Visual Arts! And the Academy of Arts University San Francisco—you SUCK! You're a no talent. If you really had talent, go practice, and then get yourself a gig! Instead of ruining the end of the day for everybody down here. You're a DISGRACE! You're everything that's gone wrong in this world. You're a self-consumed, no talent, mediocre piece of SHIT! And I've earned my right to say it! Okay?!

LO

Louis Osmosis (b. 1996, Brooklyn, NY) is an interdisciplinary artist working primarily in sculpture, drawing, performance, and text. His practice revolves heavily around craft/manufacture, performative actions, and readymades, incorporating found objects and vernacular materials from popsicle sticks to graphic t-shirts, and hornet nests to violins. Equally invested in reenactment and artistic production, Osmosis's speculative approach to form reflects his ongoing "investigation into affected modes of aspiration and lack." Osmosis received his BFA from the Cooper Union in 2018.