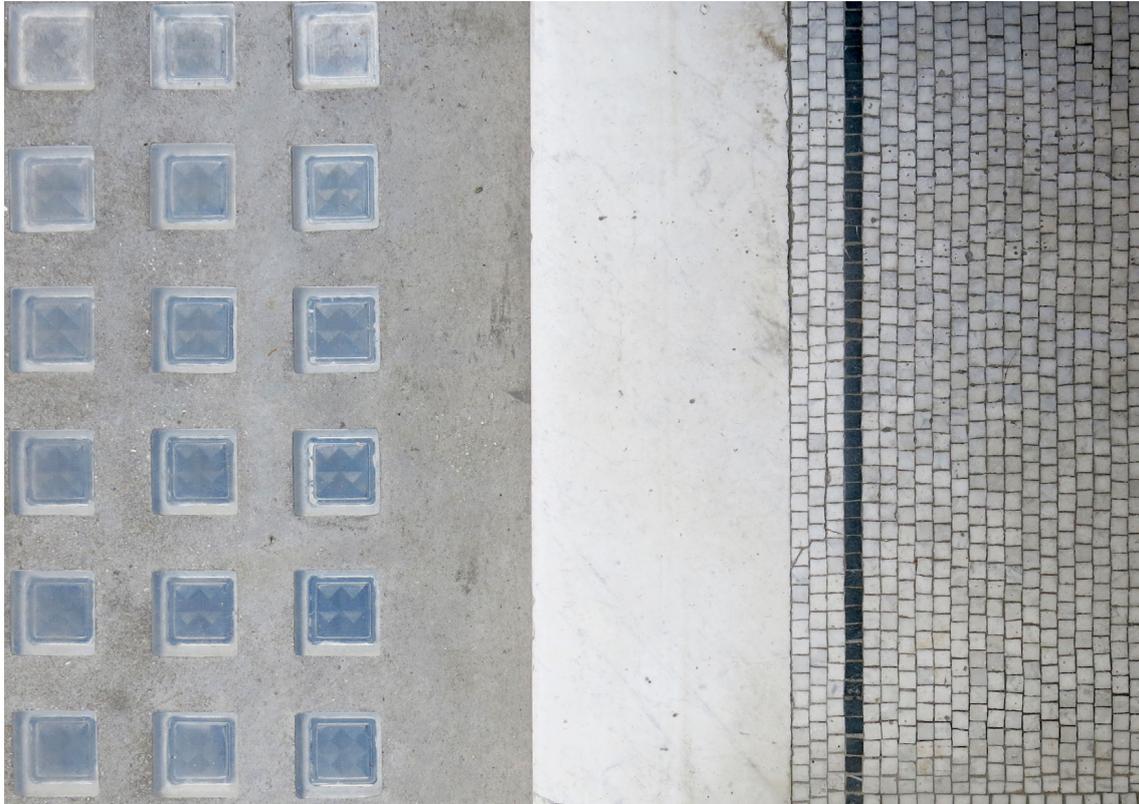


Feets, Don't Fail Me Now
Curated by Ilaria Puri Purini

03.09.15 - 10.10.15



Debora Delmar Corp
 Tamara Henderson
 Paul Housley
 Birgit Jürgenssen
 Paul Kindersley
 Michela de Mattei
 Christodoulos Panayiotou
 Renee So

“In 1921, when Klee came to the Bauhaus, he installed himself in a studio next to mine. One day I heard a strange din, as if someone was stomping rhythmically with his foot”, recalls George Muche from his time at the Bauhaus. Describing Klee’s walking as a rhythmic energetic step that contains artistic activity — intellectual research and physical action—. If shoes are what we need to walk, “these boots were made for walking” sang Nancy Sinatra, then taking them off makes us reflect on their making, their past movement and while observing their immobility; they become still-life elements. Like Klee who used to walk around his studio, let’s imagine the shoes in the exhibition as ‘shoes’ taken off by the artists at the end of a productive day. The engagement with shoes — what seems to be an exercise in still life — unwraps the temporalities and spatialities of their use, their making, their movement, and the conditions of their immobility. As, by definition, things compelled to move, the still-life of shoes moves us to challenge economies of fashion, display, desire, and necessity.

The exhibition at Belmacz brings together artworks that represent shoes as they take other forms into artworks, installations and videos. Shoes are a recurrent theme in the history of art. The painting by Vincent Van Gogh *A Pair of Shoes* (1886) is a depiction of a pair of dirty

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boots after a day in the fields (or in a studio?), made of leather, nails and soles, Marisa Merz's *Scarpette (Small shoes)* (1968), knitted with woven nylon thread so slight as to be almost self-effacing; Peter Fischli and David Weiss, Sylvie Fleury's videos where shoes are consumed and fetishised, to the sculptures of Haim Steinbach and the paintings of Philip Guston. Their manifold meanings and combinations, they come as a pair but exist on their own; functional objects but can be descriptive, decorative, sculptural and desirable; they partly embody the past action and facilitate thinking invested in an artwork.

The artworks presented — crafted and sculpted; deformed and exaggerated; painted and recorded are a sample of the thinking of the contemporary artists of today. *Feets, Don't Fail Me Now* is a form of thinking around their practice with the most banal and humble and overseen object — a shoe without its purpose — as Sinatra sang “to walk all over you” —; displayed for their manifold connotations; portraits of the artists that worked with, around and about them.

