



## **ABABAB**

Ryan Cosbert, Luke O'Halloran, Beatrice Scaccia

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Text by Benedetta Monti

ABABAB makes possible the meeting of opposing styles, bonded by a common denominator: the use of recurring representation patterns. Ryan Cosbert's research is rooted in the political sphere, a critique reduced to a geometric sign etched on canvas in a repetitive and essential way. Beatrice Scaccia focuses on the prostheses of attraction, pictorially highlighted through the misuse of female trousseau elements, such as wigs and jewelry. Luke O'Halloran's works often show playing cards crossed in a space of surreal gravity; in his paintings, the continual mention of the same theme evokes a sense of certainty, while the dimension of chance, in contrast, draws attention to precariousness and risk.

Ryan Cosbert (1999, Brookling, NY) focuses on political genre issues such as the African diaspora, the consequences of subjugation and oppression, and their historical and generational impact on the black community; she renders her vision in a formally essential style by condensing conceptual content into geometric layers. Cosbert pays homage to the house where she grew up, dotted with neat tiles on the floor and walls inserted by her mother one by one. The artist creates a bridge to her past and to the past of the black community by binding public and private on a single surface: from personal imagery to the history of black culture. The weave of the canvas appears in a minimalist key, with a mesh that accommodates four-sided material forms, incorporating, in her own paintings, physical elements married to pictorial materials, superimposing themselves on the represented subject as prostheses, blending in and concluding the work.

In 1943 Simone Weil wrote that *risk is the essential need of the soul*, and so it is with Luke O'Halloran (1991, Thousand Oaks, CA), who imbues the canvas with parallel worlds where play and illusion coexist. Swirling decks of cards, unstable castles immortalized in the second before they give way, isolated magic games that, without the exalted audience, turn into Kafkaesque *still lifes*. The artist emphasizes the ambivalence of risk in the everyday, the disappointing ways humans use to manipulate chance, and the presence of the playful in the most pointless and fallacious situations. As the bees' dance demonstrates another way of communicating, similarly O'Halloran mutates painting into code, recording a figurative constant that repeated as a whole becomes an alphabet, and finally writing.

Beatrice Scaccia (1978, Frosinone, Italy) is moved by an explicit curiosity toward expressions of human exaggeration. Strongly influenced by the manners of her hometown, near the Italian Capital, then by the extremely commercial and fictional nature of New York City, where she lives, she focuses on the devices of mask composition in human identity. "I developed a fascination with the absurdity of artifice. This early interest later became the subject of my art, along with the inextricable connection between beauty and monstrosity in female archetypes." Blinded by the seductive aesthetics of Venetian wigs, by the costumes of the *commedia dell'arte*, she looks up to

Domenico Gnoli and is accompanied by the surreal legacy of art history. Scaccia reworks the elements that are part of the illusion in beauty and the construction of appearance, compressed on the canvas as surreal sets of affectation. Objects thus decontextualized, away from the human figure or the dressing room, no longer maintaining that aura of prestige and uniqueness, resulting in true parodies of *bon ton*.

ABABAB is the unusual translation of this confrontation between the styles of Ryan Cosbert, Luke O'Halloran and Beatrice Scaccia, juxtaposing their work and respective research, so contrasting as to entail a divergence elevating each other's style.

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Ryan Cosbert (1999, Brooklyn, NY) recently graduated from the School of Visual Arts (SVA) in New York City with a BFA in Fine Arts. Recent exhibitions include: Phillips x Superposition Gallery House of Crowns (2021); Columbia University (Macy Art Gallery) Vocoder (2021); UTA Artist Space CARPE DIEM (2021); Harper's Books Melrose (2021); Band Of Vices coLAB An Ode To (2021).

Luke O'Halloran (1991 Thousand Oaks, CA), based in New York City. Recent exhibitions include: All the world began with a yes, curated by Josh Lockman, The Lodge, Los Angeles (2022); Cards cats people and stars, Nicelle Beauchene, NYC, (2022); Dealing, Kapp Kapp, NYC, (2022); Looking Back, the 12th White Columns Annual, curated by Mary Manning, White Columns, NYC, (2022); The Fool, 8th House, Mexico City, Mexico, (2022).

Beatrice Scaccia (1978, Frosinone, Italy), Italian artist based in New York City. Solo exhibitions include: With Their Striking Features, JDJ Tribeca, New York (2022); My Hope Chest, Katonah Museum of Art, New York (2021); HomeMade, Magazzino Italian Art, New York (2020); A bust isn't enough, The Center for the less Good Idea, Johannesburg (2020).

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