ALMINE RECH

The Wall: Roby Dwi Antono

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Roby Dwi Antono's art is a window opening onto the fantastical visions of childhood. The artist's world oscillates between graphic art, especially illustrations for children, and science fiction. Antono is inspired by themes from pop culture and employs macabre humor to highlight the contradictions of the human experience.

With his exhibition The Wall, the Indonesian painter Roby Dwi Antono invites us into his very personal and raw inner world, which is enveloped in what looks like a bodily cavity. What is the source of this feeling of familiarity, of re-cognition, upon viewing an artwork that is deeply dream-like and personal? First and foremost, it stems from our experience of being a child, with a new, magnetic gaze embodied in a series of youthful, almost human faces.

The artist's fascination with the cycle of growth and emergence resonates in Seed of Life, his series of works on paper, and Lunar Ritual, paintings that play along the borders of a membranous environment.

Roby Dwi Antono constantly questions the living and lived experience, producing hybrid or monstrous creatures bursting with Joy & Sorrow, to quote the title of one of his artworks. Creating a deceptively sweet, childlike atmosphere, Roby's dolls, with their horrifically empty stares, give us a sensation of troubling strangeness caused by something that feels very close but is nevertheless unknown.
Roby subtly steps across centuries: from the most personal to the most universal, he recreates the world of Hieronymus Bosch and his Garden of Earthly Delights, staging the conflicts of the human experience, which is torn between animality and humanity, suffering and pleasure, good and evil.

Closer to our own time, Roby Dwi Antono's work is rooted in Max Ernst's surrealism or the Pop surrealism of Mark Ryden. Roby finds his inspiration in the great picture book of childhood, with its monsters and its disturbing creatures and dolls. These surrealist creations that once lived only in Dwi Antono's imagination come to life once again in this exhibition.