ALMINE RECH

Tursic & Mille
Sweet Nothings

Jan 11 — Feb 24, 2024 | New York, Upper East Side

Almine Rech New York is pleased to announce *Sweet Nothings*, Tursic and Mille's seventh solo exhibition with the gallery, on view from January 11 to February 24, 2024.

For a practice that seems to exist outside of time, Tursic and Mille hold this very element in utmost regard when creating together. The artist duo's more than two-decade long partnership finds maturation in *Sweet Nothings*, where five distinct series of works overlap and mutate with regard to their origins and evolution.

An abbreviated retrospective of sorts, new work that often finds its start from the past fills the gallery space pokes holes in linear modes of artmaking. It's fitting that Tursic and Mille got their start in the year 2000, the turn of a century that has come to define the not so distinct past with the rapidly changing technological future. By that point, well into the Information Age, the duo looked to the vast well of material that existed at their fingertips to create paintings as objects. Little did the two know the accelerated focus and consequent impact that the Internet and image culture would accrue in the coming decades. In the age of content, the artists have refined a practice that is purely content-focused. If a painting is a thought, then Tursic and Mille are a never-ending stream of consciousness.

Analogous to their practice at large, the works featured in *Sweet Nothings* speak (in quite loud tones) for themselves. Each series exists as an individual case study where the duo sets out to answer a fundamental question in which time plays a key role.

Both a new thread of investigation and anchor to the show, the series *Eaten by the Mouse* probes at a recent lived experience that contained multitudes of unexpected meaning for the artists. Upon unpacking a box of source material after a studio move, the two discovered a dead mouse laying amongst the shredded remains of their amassed references. The question of the mouses death—due to overconsumption, underconsumption, or ingesting toxic elements—and the unexpected collaboration with the imagery the artists employ as a core aspect of their practice yieled cause for creation.

The show receives its namesake from *Sentimental Paintings*, an ongoing series that the duo revisits and evolves to fit within this current moment in their practice. An amalgamation of painting's various syntactic elements—abstraction, figuration, and now text, where *Sweet Nothings* can be read—these paintings discover themselves as they are being made; a process that begins with one element which then responds to and determines the next. Though the iconographic sources trace back to post-war period of the 1950s and 1960s, the overt optimism they elude speaks to the naïve desires society holds closely today.

The series that follow traverse a deep well of throughlines that the duo unintentionally put in place from the beginnings of their partnership's conception. Take for instance, *Papers*, a new body of work comprised of old sheets of A3 paper that have been the recipients of each artist's color tests and excess paint for the past 20 years. Artworks that have covertly surrounded Tursic and Mille on a near daily basis, finding a new context and home on the gallery wall. In clear conversation with *Papers* is the *Sisyphe* series, a more overtly sculptural take on a similar act of discarding paint remains. Both series share an idea fundamental to the artists, the question of "what to do" resulting in "the doing." Just as a Sisyphean task can never be completed, so too do Tursic and Mille never want to reach an end result. Their practice embraces an eternal restart; it embodies an attempt to understand the world, and concurrently, the true reality of creating with paint, in the process.

— Maria Vogel, writer