

DAMIAN NAVARRO

'Bit Defender'

In series of drawings or installations, where he uses various sources – from literature, cinema, or art, to his personal and family history –, Damián Navarro creates multiple narratives, which are always potential, and never resolved.

His desire to avoid any spectacular effect, and to play with codes of contemporary art, leads him to work with mundane objects, furniture for instance, that he modifies slightly with the addition of foreign elements, creating "hinge objects" – between artwork and functional object.

This position was already present in the 'Parental Sculptures', project initiated in 2006, which consisted for the artist in borrowing objects in his parents' home, to make ready-made works; his parents were consulted on the choices' merits and had to validate the selections. Over the years this process has turned into a real collaborative work, arousing the curiosity of Damián Navarro for the boundaries between what is perceived as art and what is not, as well as for constraints, dialogue and collaboration.

The exhibition 'Bit Defender' has been developed around a parental sculpture, which operates as the starting point of a series of works, ranging from drawings to sculptures. The original object – which acts on the exhibition as a mental image – is a cubic helmet with a trapezoid visor, designed by the artist when he was a child, and produced with the help of his father. Lost since this period, it was reproduced in 2008 based on the initial sketches, and completed with a red plexiglas. This object may be only anecdotal, but the trapezoidal shape of the visor never stopped to intrigue the artist – as a pattern to solve and to understand (other patterns recur repeatedly in his work taking other forms such as a triangle or the letter W).

After having produced several drawings from this recurring and even obsessive form, Damián Navarro tries to resume it and exhaust it. Rather than an episodic encounter with the trapezoid in his artistic life, he decided to fictionally accelerate the process and to devote himself exclusively to this form, analysing over a concentrated period the path that this form could have taken in his work. Thus the trapezoid appears in drawings or paintings with marbled paper; sometimes it defines the outline of the drawings – as snapshots of what you would see wearing the helmet.

This development, as often with Damián Navarro, oscillates between abstraction and reference to reality: it is both the path of a geometric shape, the return of an object of childhood, the story of a knight helmet, and the journey of a thought about perception. This ambiguity is inestimable for the artist as it guarantees the plurality of interpretations, depending on the references of each viewer.

Damián Navarro, born 1983, lives and works in Lausanne and Geneva. He recently had a solo show at 1m3 Lausanne and has participated in multiple collective exhibitions in Switzerland and Europe (such as New Jersey and Swiss Art Awards in Basel, Circuit and Curtat Tunnel in Lausanne, CAN in Neuchâtel, Fondation Salomon in Alex (F), Sculpture Center in New York). In 2011, he was awarded with the Caran d'Ache Prize. His work is currently on view in the show *La Jeunesse est un art* at Aargauer Kunsthau.

Opening: Thursday September 13th 2012, 6 – 9pm, in presence of the artist
Exhibition from September 13th to October 26th 2012