

GALERIE MARIA BERNHEIM

FATEBE X OLDPUT

Ebecho Muslimova - Bailey Scieszka

9 June - 29 July 2017

FATEBE x *OLDPUT* unfolds the encounter between two fictional characters central to the work Ebecho Muslimova (b. 1984 in Daghestan Russia, based in New York) and Bailey Scieszka (b. in 1989 in Royal Oak, MI, based in Detroit).

Through the satirical *mise en scène* of *FATEBE*, a young woman both plump and alarmingly clumsy, in bizarre situations, Ebecho Muslimova deconstructs the codes of the representation of female bodies. Systematically naked and playing with her flesh rather inventively, *FATEBE* provokes a nervous laughter. Her disarming smile forces us to question what causes our unsettlement. Is it her sagging skin and ungracious demeanor or rather her disinvolture and emancipation from our gaze?

Bailey Scieszka considers clowns to be painted people. In her cross-media practice combining drawings, installations, writing and performances, Scieszka incarnates *OLDPUT*, a clown which she presents as *an old drunk woman that keeps ranting on about her dreams*. Challenging the conventions of reality, *OLDPUT* endorses a responsibility common to clowns and artists: picking up viewers from the monotony of their daily lives.

More than a part, *FATEBE* and *OLDPUT* operate respectively as Muslimova and Scieszka's *alter egos*, which literally translates to *second selves*. While the term refers primarily to an individual's alternative personality, Cicero coined *alter ego* in the 1st century BC, he was thinking more of a true friend, a loyal friend, someone who can be trusted.

FATEBE is immune to shame and *OLDPUT* free of guilt. They are precious friends, not only to their creators but also to us viewers, because if love is blind, friendship closes its eyes.

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