

5. | Counterfeit paintings



Serie started in 2000, 99 paintings, acrylic on paper, serigraphy, 20,5 x 18,5 cm.
Courtesy of the artist.

La série de « Peintures de contrefaçon » se constitue comme un ensemble de sérigraphies qui superposent un logo de marque commerciale à des œuvres peintes par l'artiste. Ces dernières interrogent les statuts de l'original et de la copie à l'ère de la reproduction numérique et industrielle. Elle questionne également le statut de l'œuvre d'art au sein du système des productions marchandes et culturelles, dans un contexte de mondialisation économique. Les années 80 connaissent un fort développement des techniques de reproduction. La mondialisation favorise la contrefaçon qui s'étend à tous les domaines de la production industrielle. La reproductibilité touche l'objet issu de l'industrie, destiné à la consommation de masse. Les contrefaçons d'objets des grandes marques ou des marques de luxe abondent et inondent le marché.

« L'aura » de l'œuvre d'art, notion développée par Walter Benjamin, désigne son pouvoir de fascination qui dépend en partie de son originalité, de son unicité et du mystère entourant les conditions de sa production. Le développement des techniques de reproduction remettent précisément en question l'unicité et l'originalité de l'œuvre d'art, brouille la distinction entre l'original et la copie. Ce qui entraîne fatalement une perte d'aura pour l'œuvre d'art. L'aura de l'œuvre d'art est également très exploitée par les marques et par la publicité. La Laitière de Vermeer vend des yaourts, Picasso appose sa signature sur la carrosserie d'une voiture familiale, Les Tournesols de Van Gogh (qui n'a jamais rien vendu de son vivant) sont devenus le lieu commun de l'originalité et de la créativité dans les discours publicitaires.

Les sérigraphies proposées par mounir fatmi pourraient se concevoir comme une réponse à cette attaque de l'aura

The series of *Counterfeit Paintings* comprises a set of silkscreen printings that superimpose a commercial logo onto paintings made by the artist. They question the status of the original and the copy in the age of digital and industrial reproduction. They also question the status of the work of art within the system of commercial and cultural productions and in the context of economic globalization. The 1980s were a time when reproduction techniques developed considerably. Globalization favors counterfeiting that has extended to every field of industrial production. Reproducibility affects objects in the industrial domain, destined to mass consumption. Copies of objects from well-known or luxury brands are abundant and flood the market.

The "aura" of the work of art, a notion developed by Walter Benjamin, designates its capacity to fascinate, which partly depends upon its originality, its uniqueness and on the mystery surrounding the conditions of its production. The development of reproduction techniques challenges the uniqueness and the originality of the work of art and blurs the difference between the original and the copy, which inevitably leads to a loss of aura for the work of art. This aura is also very much exploited by brands and advertising. Vermeer's Milkmaid sells yogurt, Picasso has his signature on a station wagon and Van Gogh's Sunflowers (an artist who never sold any of his work in his lifetime) have become a cliché for originality and creativity in advertising discourses.

The serigraphs proposed by mounir fatmi could be perceived as an answer to such an attack on the artistic aura by the commercial system. They sport logos from well-know brands: the title might suggest a reinterpretation, an examination of the historical origins of the logo and the brand. Which can

artistique par le système marchand. Elles mettent en scène du logo de la marque : le titre invite éventuellement à une relecture, à un examen des origines historiques du logo et de la marque. Ce qui conduit parfois à des (re)découvertes curieuses. En ce qui concerne Adidas par exemple : un modeste savetier allemand à l'origine, des chaussures fabriquées main, des liens avec le régime nazi pendant la seconde guerre mondiale, presque complètement oubliés de nos jours. La stratégie artistique mime la stratégie commerciale en suivant cyniquement la logique jusqu'au bout : tant qu'on y est, pourquoi ne pas appliquer directement les logos des marques sur les œuvres d'art - et pourquoi pas le nom d'une marque de vêtement, de cosmétique ou de voiture sur le portrait de la Joconde que des millions de visiteurs contemplent chaque année ? L'opération artistique ironise pour finir. Elle inverse le processus commercial et dénonce le manque d'imagination des grandes marques. A l'instar de la marque, l'artiste s'empare du logo sans vergogne et ainsi s'approprie son pouvoir de captation de l'attention du public.

sometimes lead to unexpected (re)discoveries. About Adidas for example: originally a humble German cobbler, shoes made by hand, links with the Nazi regime during World War II, all of that almost forgotten today. The artistic strategy mimics the commercial strategy by cynically following the logic all the way: while we're at it, why not apply the brand logos directly on the works of art – and why not the name of a fashion, cosmetics or car brand on the portrait of Mona Lisa that millions of visitors admire every year? Ultimately, this is an artistic operation fully of irony. It reverses the commercial process and denounces the lack of imagination of major brands. Just like the brands do, the artist shamelessly takes possession of the logo and thus appropriates its capacity to grab the public's attention.

Studio fatmi, Juillet 2019.

Studio Fatmi, July 2019.

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Studio Fatmi, July 2019



Counterfait paintings

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