

# THE SET TABLE

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There is a cyclic slip between anxiety and arousal. The spectator may be carried by a more rational understanding, or be driven by the sensuality of the sculptures. Someone connected to historical references<sup>6</sup> will notice the continuous construction and deconstruction of form and of what is formalized. Pipe, cigarette holder, gasper, rod, phallus, dick, cock, shaft, prick, penis, wood, wiener, pecker, schlong... may have the same voice and conjure up the same meaning. The object becomes desire.

When this anxiety reaches the sensitive, it makes us partners in this violation, accomplices in the intimate sense of these forms. In Bataille's words: "Bodies open out to a state of continuity through secret channels that give us a feeling of obscenity. Obscenity is our name for the uneasiness which upsets the physical state associated with self-possession, with the possession of a recognized and stable individuality."<sup>1</sup>

The obscene passes through the eye, leading us to indistinction. It is impossible to dissociate these objects, given that the crossroads between distinct materials forces them to modify themselves, crushing the idea of autonomy of the artifacts. Such action allows the pieces to intensify their sexuality. A movement that, in its proportion, brings lifeless matter to life.

We circle the set table with the eyes of those who devour a banquet. Piece by piece, with bodies fitting perfectly together, each one made of a different meat. Wood, rubber, bone, metal and stone, these are the great protagonists of the scene. Relics fastened against one another. The fit is what supports the apparently stable sculptures. There is a surprising junction or, better yet, some kind of transgression. The position of the objects (the hard clashing with the soft and, especially, what is forbidden)

exposes the decisive matter for the activity. Fact: it is the erotic that is greatly responsible for deformation.

The member presents a small orifice, a hole, a slit, a cleft in its extremities that may or may not be filled. Those who slip in their cigarette may smother it, leaving it with no air and quite satisfied. To occupy one of its orifices in order to, then, share the set table. Their partners are relics, collected throughout a lifetime. Artifacts that hold onto stories, recollections for those who have them. The relationships of power between the objects and the author are an ambiguity. To exhibit them is, even if subjectively, to put the author on display.

The banquet goes on. May we have the pleasure of enjoying those that are on the table.

### ***where clay the house the body***

In an empty room, four people and four tons of clay. The weight of the fresh clay lies on the floor, the soles of the feet touch the surface. The clay carefully slips between the fingers of each performer and covers their heels a little. They wear only clay, underwear and a white t-shirt. The softness of the floor massages the slow gait of their walk. Little by little, their feet are embraced by that mass.

The moistness that emanate arises from the ground hovers in the air. The smell of earth takes over the room, filling the empty spaces around which the individuals move. Slowly, human sweat makes its presence felt. Breathing mingles with the air bubbles stuck in the clay, forcing the air in and out, and again, in and out. The pores open up to the point of touching the walls and reach the ceiling. There is no more distinction between body, house and clay.

Each performer carries a metal bucket with vaseline and a wooden stool. The actions are simple: walking, sitting and molding. Gradually, the verbs are contemplated. Topographic forms appear on their feet searching for support. The clay balances itself on the vertical, and even being soft remains erect.

One in front of the other, the performers touch each other through the clay. The movement of their hands is reminiscent of masturbation. This scene alone would be enough to take us to climax. The sensuality of that touch awakens the image of a phallus hardening between the fingers of a lover. Back and forth, it slides smoothly, humidifying and caressing it tenderly. The gesture is simple, and only practice can make perfect.

Always careful, the performer knows that just one miscalculated touch may cause it to fall apart. All it takes is a tiny slip for the shape to tremble. One must remember that devastation is closer than imagined. The architecture put in place protects the body, a “body which is at the core of the sculpture, which gives the body an idea.”<sup>2</sup> Person, clay, vaseline, and the action of building. The erotic continues making room for the profane and the sacred.<sup>9</sup> The work carries in itself a rational gesture, but it is enhanced by an sudden sense of sensuality.

Once the act is finished, the performers leave and the spectator is left to enjoy this pleasure. For those who did not see the performance, the marks left on the clay remain. Those who did lay witness feel moist between their legs.

<sup>1</sup> To quote Claudio Cretti.

<sup>2</sup> A definition by Georges Bataille, *Erotism*, p. 45: “The expressions ‘profane world (= world of work or reason) and ‘sacred world’ (= world of violence) are none the less of great antiquity. *Profane* and *sacred*, though, are words from the vocabulary of irrationalism.”