

Luisa Me
The Crab Chair
Curated by Hector Campbell
Presented by BeAdvisors Art Department
9 French Place, Shoreditch, E1 6JB

Dates: Friday 12th November - Saturday 27th November

Opening: Friday 12th November, 6-9pm

Opening Hours: Wednesdays-Saturdays, 12-6pm

In-Conversation: Luisa Me & Marcelle Joseph, Tuesday 23rd November, 7-8pm

Luisa Me have operated as an artistic duo since meeting at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Urbino in 2016, their pseudonymous title borrowed from an Italian colloquialism roughly translated to 'him with me'. Their interdisciplinary practice engages with the artistic and cultural traditions of their Italian heritage, depicting distinctive Christ-like characters, employing altarpiece arrangements and recalling religious architecture through sculptural reliefs. Similarly, the beachfront existence of the artists' native, coastal Pesaro aesthetically invades through sun-bleached, weathered textures, produced by a sustained addition and sanding back of paint (at points perforating the canvas), as well as ornamental marble dusted vase visage, their surface akin to seaside salt crystals.

In *The Crab Chair*, Luisa Me introduce for the first time an extended narrative framework, with the artworks and accompanying short story not only inspired by Camusian concepts of absurdity and late-20th century Italian cinema's fondness for a skyline punctuated by cranes and construction, but also their first-hand experience of maintaining a studio in South Bermondsey, a target in recent years for property developers speculatively seeking to preempt the area's inevitable gentrification.

Here, figures partake in cultish, tribal rituals within a paradisaal, spa-like oasis inside the surrounding scaffolding and concrete cityscape, a marine mirage of high-heeled clawfoot bathtubs. This primitive, pious populace parade one another around, arms linked to form a four-handed seat ('Pope chair' in Pesaro parlance), as a tale of Kafkaian metamorphosis unfolds across the three-floors of 9 French Place, resulting in therianthropic human-crab hybrids, hard-shelled, thick-skinned and ready to face the trials and tribulations of a city in constant construction.

Luisa Me and Hector Campbell would like to thank Mauro Mattei for facilitating the exhibition.

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