

FRIEDMAN BENDA
515 W 26TH STREET
NEW YORK NY 10001

SPLIT PERSONALITY
CURATED BY ALICE STORI LIECHTENSTEIN
JAN 11 – FEB 6 2021

Could we classify the luxuriant growth of objects as we do a flora or fauna, complete with tropical and glacial species, sudden mutations, and varieties threatened by extinction?

– From “The System of Objects” by Jean Baudrillard

New York (October 16, 2020) – **Friedman Benda** is pleased to present its seventh annual guest-curated exhibition *Split Personality*. Curated by Alice Stori Liechtenstein, independent curator and founder of Schloss Hollenegg for Design, the exhibition explores how functional objects undergo a process of mutation to acquire symbolic value, and thus develop split personalities that oscillate between their different identities.

The works on display at Friedman Benda, ambiguously classifiable as chairs, tables, rugs, are meant as furniture of practical and comfortable nature. And yet, as curator Alice Stori Liechtenstein puts it, “the personality and implicit meaning of these pieces are so assertive that they appear to be at odds with the function.” In the course of history, objects (and furniture in our specific case) were rarely valued and made purely for their function. They have always carried specific cultural, subjective or philosophical messages. Objects are used to characterize, communicate and develop our sense of self and construct our own identity. The idea that objects might have a split personality might help us to recognize the different identities they are capable of embodying, and acknowledge their power to be alternatively functional furniture or conveyors of meaning.

Artists and designers on view include: Arnaud Eubelen, Chris Schanck, Christien Meindertsma, Commonplace Studio, Emma Fague, Fernando Laposse, Ismael Rifai, Jonathan Trayte, Katie Stout, mischer’traxler, Nobukho Nqaba, Rich Aybar, Soft Baroque, Brynjar Sigurdarson, Studio Wieki Somers, Thomas Ballouhey, and Toomas Toomepuu.

About Alice Stori Liechtenstein

Alice Stori Liechtenstein (Milan, 1978) is an independent curator specialised in contemporary design. After studying architecture and design in Milan and Barcelona, she worked a number of years as exhibition designer. From 2014 to 2017 she wrote a daily design blog, during which time she started analysing the changes in the disciplines related to design. She is the founder of Schloss Hollenegg for Design, an international project based in Austria, to support design culture by offering an exhibition platform and a residency program to young emerging designers. She has also curated Operae in Turin in 2017, Design after Darwin in Venice in 2018, Alcova Sassetti in Milan in 2019. She is a public speaker and lecturer for the Exhibition Design Master at the FH Joanneum in Graz.

About Friedman Benda

Friedman Benda identifies and advances key narratives that intersect contemporary design, craft, architecture, fine art, and cutting-edge technological research. The gallery promotes synthesis between leading creative thinkers and makers by creating opportunities to advance new connections within the global design community. Friedman Benda is committed to a critical view of design history. We aim to expand the design dialogue from its established sources, exploring perspectives that have previously been marginalized. Spanning five continents and four generations, Friedman Benda represents a roster of seminal established and emerging designers, as well as historically significant estates. Since 2007, the gallery’s exhibitions, publications and collaborations with institutions have played a vital role in the development of the contemporary design market and scholarship. For further information please visit www.friedmanbenda.com and the gallery’s Instagram [@friedman_benda](https://www.instagram.com/friedman_benda) and YouTube channel.

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