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Flash Art

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ART FRAGMENTS FROM THE BIG APPLE

Clarina Bezzola

Cynthia Broan Gallery

A citizenry of sorts convenes at the bell tower of a pitch-perfect, Swiss townlet. Straight out of a quintessential Swiss travel poster, maiden Bezzola appears in full red-and-black folk regalia, sweetly belting out a ditty o'er the picturesque green. Her performance is abruptly halted, however. Like Kafka's Gregor's transmutation into a cockroach, Bezzola, stuffing herself into a cylindrical, stretchy tan sack, becomes a mole. Squirring across the ground, she flips off the sanguine Kelly green fabric covering each piece. Uncloaked, the villagers are disconcertingly stark, uniform beige canisters with ungainly, protruding extremities. Fat, lumpy tendrils, sheathed in pantyhose-nylon, spandex, and vinyl, mingle with scruffy tufts of goat hair and unruly single teeth. With appendages AWOL, these physical forms manifest the intangible, each spewing out the guts and spleen of the psyche. Indeed, burrowing beneath the surface of presentable appearances, Bezzola, as a worm, writhes among tubers and tumors of the subconscious. As it turns out, these psychological townsfolk are receptacles for their own and others' emotional garbage.



Clarina Bezzola, *Gathering*, 2003. Installation view with performance. Courtesy: Cynthia Broan Gallery

From the clumsy goat-fur mask, *Fuzzhead*, and the mangy poof of sheep wool, *Pet*, to the unsettling wrinkly *Knot*, complete with an adorable Eraser Baby, these states, like those of a Dostoyevski character, are hard to stomach. Moreover, Bezzola's people, plugged up with their own bloated self-delusions, obsessions, and other brain warpages, do not actually circulate amongst each other, but are stuck in their own trap-pings like a soldier still fighting a war in his head after it is over.

-Gae Savannah