

Sharon Van Overmeire (BE, 1985)

www.artnet.com/artists/sharon-van-overmeire

Van Overmeire was born and studied visual arts in Antwerp. She is a sculptor. She prefers working with clay. She works intuitive combining contemporary pop culture with ancient rituals, history and knowledge. She uses symbols and plays with re-uploading known symbols with different knowledge. She makes, in her own words, "fictional sculptures". She finds it difficult to see her works as fully autonomous, as they can cease to exist in their current form of presentation at any time. In addition, this choice of words refers to the way in which she gives a voice to her sculptures; by having them accompanied by a scenario based on found stories, taken from life or from literature, and the realisation that we are no longer in touch with the multitude of objects that surround us. Van Overmeire is strong and energetic. She exhibited all over Belgium and Europe with shows at De Koer (Gent), GEM museum for actual and contemporary art (Den Haag), Lucie Drdova Gallery (Prague) and many more. In 2019 Van Overmeire collaborated with Artlead creating an artist edition - #16, and a billboard. She currently lives and works on the countryside of Nazareth.

ABOUT THE WORK

'Caesar Millan' (2019)

140,0 x 61,0 x 87,0 cm

Stonewear

The Dog Whisperer (Dog Whisperer with Cesar Millan) is a television show on National Geographic that ran from 2004 till 2012. Milan, a flamboyant dog psychologist helps people training their dog. He became kind of famous for intervening with unmanageable pets that started to attack their owners / family.

'Caesar Millan' is a perfect example of the method used by Van Overmeire: she combined Christian elements with the popular dog whisperer. The red ceramic figure is a demon like being with an open hand and a hand that has two fingers that are sticking in the air like in a Christ-like manner (as he was depicted on many paintings). In most of the visual images of Jesus – both in picture and sculpture forms – fingers of His right hand, raised in blessing, follow a particular arrangement. The fingers spell out "IC XC", a widely used four letter abbreviation of the Greek for Jesus (IHCOYC) Christ (XPICTOC). It is by the name of Jesus that we are saved and receive blessings: "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;" (Phil 2:10). Van Overmeire gives a dark change to this use. Instead of the right hand she lets her figure use its left hand to do this. The right hand is open. Like ready to receive something. According to many Catholic sources the five open fingers say to represent the Five Wounds of Christ. But switching the hands (and the meanings) may lead to evil, ready to take over the statue. The red figure is presented in a sitting position, on top of two little dogs. These dogs refer to the dogs of Millan, the dogwhisper: a large pitbull called "Daddy" and a younger pitbull called "Junior". Millan used these two dogs as examples in his trainings towards other dogs who misbehaved.