MAURIZIO CATTELAN
SHORT WORK DESCRIPTIONS

NIGHT
An exhibition that distrust chronology and fixed meaning alike. The works do not explain one another; they keep each other awake. Night is what remains when the explanations go home.

SCAR
A manhole cover engraved with the titles of the works in the exhibition. Like the opening page of a book, it introduces what follows without explaining it. The exhibition begins beneath your feet.

PURGATORY
A reduced Brandenburg Gate repeated inside the museum. A monument becomes a threshold between history and uncertainty. Every entrance also contains a judgment.

ALL
Nine bodies carved in white marble and covered after an unnamed event. Stone gives permanence to the most temporary condition of the body. Death equalizes without explaining.

HIM
A kneeling, childlike figure reveals the face of Adolf Hitler. Historical horror appears vulnerable, prayerful and almost harmless. Evil becomes dangerous when it asks for sympathy.

DAWN
A female figure lies inside a coffin-like structure. The body is suspended between sleep, display, burial and crucifixion. Every dawn carries the remains of the night.

NOVECENTO
A taxidermied horse hangs from the ceiling. An animal associated with movement and strength becomes dead weight. History often sacrifices what it once celebrated.

AFTER
A small dog sleeps inside a large industrial tube. A structure built for passage becomes an accidental shelter. Survival begins by giving the world another purpose.

CHARLIE DON'T SURF
A child is fixed to a school desk. A place designed for education becomes an instrument of discipline. Before institutions teach us what to know, they teach us how to sit.

PENTECOST
A donkey remains attached to a cart after the work has ended. It carries the weight but is never given the words. Some bodies build the world while others describe it.

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BONES
A marble eagle lies fallen on the ground. A symbol of authority is reduced to weight and remains. The fall of power is rarely celebrated, but often awaited.

DUST
An extinguisher filled with human ashes. A device designed to extinguish danger becomes a reliquary of what cannot be saved. Everything eventually returns to dust.

WE
Two identical figures lie together in the same bed. They suggest companionship, conflict, and the two selves that can inhabit the same person. We are rarely alone, even when no one else is there.

LA RIVOLUZIONE SIAMO NOI
A miniature figure based on Joseph Beuys hangs suspended in space. The promise of social transformation becomes fragile and unable to touch the ground. Revolutions often survive longer as poses than as actions.

FIRST
An egg is fixed to the wall with a nail. A symbol of birth and possibility is held in place by violence. Every beginning can also be interrupted.

PEOPLE
Hundreds of pigeons occupy the ceiling above the visitors. Visible and invisible, they inhabit the museum without asking permission. The people we ignore never completely disappear.

NEVER
A drummer continues beating his drum on the museum roof. He may be announcing something or repeating a gesture whose purpose has been forgotten. Persistence is difficult to distinguish from refusal.

CATTELAN
An artist interested less in making images than in changing the way they behave. Nothing is invented; everything is displaced. Familiar things become unfamiliar without ever becoming something else.

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