

Francesco Pantaleone Gallery is pleased to present Casa Fontana, a special project by Claire Fontaine, celebrating its eighth anniversary in Palermo.

Starting from the assumption that home is a place where we are restored and nourished, the artist presents a series of new works that address the sphere of food and restoration in particular.

Radically transformed by its mediatic image, food, an integral part of our bodies, here becomes both sculpture and ambiguous object. Who and what nourishes us physically and metaphysically remains an open question, as does the uncertain line separating the organic and the synthetic, the biological and the artificial. Two of the sculptures (The Raw and The Cooked) are portraits of hamburgers: the quintessential mysterious food and iconic fast food items, containing unidentified meats, which can now also be made with synthetic foods or with clones of edible cells created in a laboratory

The "raw/cooked " dichotomy accompanies the "real/artificial" one in Is it Cake?, a sculpture that evokes the ready-made and the "is it cake?" reels in which the cut objects, identical to the originals, seem edible - but are they really, or is it all an AI fairy tale

When food is used as a trap to attract tourists or as bait to murder besieged populations, when it is produced according to criteria that put profit before the health of those who consume it, when people die queuing for a bag of rice, get sick from the toxic substances we ingest daily, or develop an unhealthy relationship with everything that we put in our mouths, haunted by allergens, calories, saturated fats, or desires and fears that destroy our lives, we understand how much the idea of "home" is in danger. The transformation of apartments located in touristic destinations into invisible hotels and of restaurants into an industry for strangers, has brought Fordism right into our homes and made all of us (humans, plants, and animals) into full-time workers in the social factory that is the current world of contemporary productivity.

Casa Fontana ironically suggests that the safe space is no longer within the walls of our homes around a lavishly laid table, but in the relationships that we create with one another to protect ourselves from contemporary madness. Casa Fontana also reflects on the current state of capitalism, which blurs the line between lived reality and the delirious representations we consume daily—each of us isolated behind our screens, yet surrounded by people of all ages. If Covid taught us that being alone and consuming images was a way to protect our neighbors, the present teaches us that this is the surest way to contract mental illnesses and eating disorders.

An invitation to immerse ourselves in a shared reality and a celebration of the joy of living and working in Palermo, Casa Fontana allows us to do something that was forbidden as children: play with food.