

EVGENY ANTUFIEV
Art Basel Statements
→ Hall 2.1, Booth N4
Messeplatz 10, 4005 Basel
21-26 September 2021

For Art Basel Statements, Emalin is pleased to present a solo project with Evgeny Antufiev.

Evgeny Antufiev was born in the Siberian Republic of Tuva, on the border with Mongolia. Rooted in the region's spiritual practices, folklore and shamanism, his work explores the tension between the interactions we have with objects of art, objects of myth and objects of nostalgia. In his methodically organised worlds, the artist's ongoing interest in the rise, demise and disappearance of civilisations unfolds in an immersive visual narrative.

Processes of zealous collecting inform Antufiev's approach to materiality and display, bringing together symbolically overlaid forms case in bronze, embroidered on repurposed textiles, carved in wood and adorned with amber and precious stones. In his methodically organized worlds, the artist collapses physical and symbolic orders: the relationships between images, materials and narrative components are ever elusive. Investigating the contemporary currency of myth and ritual, his immersive installations infiltrate museological spaces, where they mimic the sanctity of tombs and the ritual aura of places of symbolic significance to tease our existential nostalgia for systemic meaning to be found in eternity.

At stake in Antufiev's practice is the belief that the cultivation of mythological consciousness can achieve a reconnection with different worldviews. By spinning enigmatic storylines that resist straightforward interpretation, his installations pose the possibility of alternate models of thought and action. In mining materials, objects and myths for transformative potential, the artist's practice can be situated within a wider critical discourse about the real and imagined experiences tied to the dissolution of the Soviet Union. As part of a generation that grew up amidst the reconfiguring of nations that also meant establishing new relationships to history and ideology, Antufiev creates environments that may also be understood as a psychological landscape where ambiguity functions as an organising principle mediating cultural anxieties.

At Art Basel, a hand-laid mosaic made entirely of marble and precious stones spans the central wall of the presentation. On either side of the mosaic triptych, gemstone-cruled vessels and bronze-crowned textile busts elaborate the narrative scene, centering around a large-scale marble labyrinth housing a group of miniature bronze figurines. The walls themselves are clad with faux marble PVC – popular in middle-class Russian home furnishings – that bring into tension new materials and technologies with the strange synthetic realities produced by a fascination with the bygone grandeur of past civilisations.

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Evgeny Antufiev (b. 1986 in Kyzyl, Russia) lives and works in Moscow, Russia. He studied at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Moscow, where he was awarded the Kandinsky Prize for Young Artist Project of the Year. Antufiev's solo exhibitions have been held at institutions including Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, Rome; MOSTYN Museum, Wales; M HKA Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp; and Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia. His work has been included in group exhibitions at Fondation Cartier, Paris; The Baltic Triennial 13, CAC, Vilnius; Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow; Manifesta 11, Zurich; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; and New Museum, New York.

Antufiev's work is included in the permanent collections of Centre Pompidou, Paris; Kiasma Museum, Helsinki; M HKA Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp; Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Moscow; and Tate, London. In October, his work will be on view as part of *Water Hard Stone*, the forthcoming New Museum Triennial (New York), curated by Margot Norton and Jamillah James.