

Downs & Ross

55 Chrystie Street #203, New York NY 10002

106 Eldridge Street, New York NY 10002

DANIELE MILVIO

Mille Furie

Apr 30–May 28, 2017

55 Chrystie St. #203 & 106 Eldridge St.
Wed–Sun, 12–6pm

Opening Reception
Sunday, Apr 30, 6–8pm

Malambruno: Spirits of the deep, Farfarello, Ciriatto, Baconero, Astarotte, Alichino, or whatever else you are called, I adjure you in the name of Beelzebub, and command you by virtue of my art, which can unhinge the moon, and nail the sun in the midst of the heavens, come one of you with your prince's permission, to put all the powers of hell at my disposal.

Farfarello: Here I am.

Mal.: Who are you?

Far.: Farfarello, at thy service.

Mal.: Have you the mandate of Beelzebub?

Far.: I have; and can thus do for thee all that the king himself could do, and more than lies in the power of all other creatures together.

Mal.: It is well. I wish to be satisfied in but one desire.

Far.: Thou shalt be obeyed. What is it? Dost thou wish for majesty surpassing that of the Atrides?

Mal.: No.

Far.: More wealth than shall be found in El Dorado, when it is discovered?

Mal.: NO.

Far.: An empire as large as that of which Charles V. dreamt one night?

Mal.: No.

Far.: A mistress chaster than Penelope?

Mal.: No: methinks the devil's aid were superfluous for that.

Far.: Honours and success, however wicked thou mayst be?

Mal.: I should rather more need the devil, if I wished the contrary, under such circumstances.

Far.: Then what dost thou want?

Mal.: Make me happy for a moment.

Far.: I cannot.

Mal.: Why?

Far.: I give you my word of honour— I cannot do it.

Mal.: The word of honour of a good demon?

Far.: Yes, to be sure. Thou shouldst know that there are good devils as well as good men.

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Mal.: And you must know that I will hang you by the tail to one of these beams if you do not instantly obey me without more words.

Far.: It were easier for you to kill me, than for me to satisfy your demands.

Mal.: Then return with my malediction, and let Beelzebub come himself.

Far.: Beelzebub and the whole army of hell would be equally powerless to render you or any of your race happy.

Mal.: Not even for a single moment?

Far.: As impossible for a moment, half a moment, or the thousandth part of a moment, as for a lifetime.

Mal.: Well, since you cannot make me happy in any way, at least free me from unhappiness.

Far.: On condition that you no longer love yourself above everything else.

Mal.: I shall only cease doing that when I die.

Far.: But as long as you live you will be unable to do it. Your nature would tolerate anything rather than that.

Mal.: So it is.

Far.: Consequently, loving yourself above everything, you desire your own happiness more than anything. But because this is unattainable, you must necessarily be unhappy.

Mal.: Even when engaged in pleasure; since no gratification can make me happy, or satisfy me.

Far.: Truly none.

Mal.: And because pleasure cannot satisfy my soul's innate desire for happiness, it is not true pleasure, and during its continuance I shall still be unhappy.

Far.: As you say: because in men and other living beings, the deprivation of happiness, even though pain and misfortune be wanting, implies express unhappiness. This, too, during the continuance of so-called pleasures.

Mal.: So that from birth to death our unhappiness never ceases for an instant.

Far.: Yes, it ceases whenever you sleep dreamlessly, or when, from one cause or another, you are deprived of your senses.

Mal.: But never, so long as we are sensible that we live.

Far.: Never.

Mal.: So that in fact it were better not to live than to live.

Far.: If the absence of unhappiness be better than unhappiness itself.

Mal.: Then?

Far.: Then if you would like to give me your soul before its time, I am ready to carry it away with me.

Daniele Milvio (b. 1988, Genoa; lives and works in Milan and Ansedonia). Solo exhibitions: Downs & Ross, New York; Weiss/Falk, Basel; Federico Vavassori, Milan; Hester, New York; Hadrian, Rome. Selected group exhibitions: Supportico Lopez; Berlin; Pivo, São Paulo; Lambda Lambda Lambda, Priština; Federico Vavassori, Milan; Grand Century, New York; castillo/corales, Paris; Rowing, London; Cura.Basement, Rome; Gasconade, Milan; Motel Lucie, Milan.

(The above dialogue appears in Leopardi, Giacomo. "Dialogue Between Malambruno and Farfarello." *Essays and Dialogues of Giacomo Leopardi*. Translated by Charles Edwardes. Trübner & Co., 1882, pp. 33-35.)