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We are proud to present a two-person exhibition of New York based artist Bea Orlandi and Basel based artist Arnaud Wohlhauser.

Curated by Olga Generalova, the exhibition stages the proximities of the two artists' work. The projects on view, made specifically for this occasion, took shape via a regular exchange between Orlandi and Wohlhauser, who had never met before. L'Avanspettacolo reflects this correspondence. Covering different mediums as well as perspectives, the works on view as well as the artists' concepts, ideas, and experiences, overlap and intertwine. As separate letters, written or received, *everything in it is both head and tail, alternately and reciprocally*¹: the core qualities of each work become solely evident when in dialogue with one another.

The exhibition is named after the *"avanspettacolo"*, a form of theatrical performance developed in Italy during the fascist era, consisting of short comedic sketches staged before the start of a movie. In Orlandi and Wohlhauser's work, the promised movie never begins. Instead, the exhibition is set up in 'intervals' - instances marked by objects that act as signifiers of time and in-between states.

In her practice, Orlandi generates stock characters that embody and perform scripts emerging from a pattern of connections between elements of science, culture, history and folklore. The *avanspettacolo*, is also one of the generative elements for her clown/orange character "Augustine". Other semiotic nodes that determine this character's manifestation are the Italian folktale of "The love of three Oranges", early scoliosis remedies and body casting techniques, the design of juicing and peeling tools, and female clown characters in cinema and television history. Constructed upon such a basis, Augustine emerges out of a contemporary condition with a goal camouflaged behind a comedic attempt: to make the machine of time and progress run idle.

In a parallel way, Wohlhauser explores the possibilities of pausing everyday rules and rituals. He achieves this by recombining mundane and familiar objects, like the marble tables of the neighboring Wiedikon train station he reproduced at half size, or mass-produced yearly calendars. Similarly, a lone person can be sporadically found in the gallery's office absent-mindedly shaking his leg, sitting on a chair borrowed from the Schauspielhaus Zurich theater. In this way, Wohlhauser is staging metaleptic moments in which performative rearrangements linger for a short period, during which time and space briefly change. Eventually, the exhibition is said to last precisely 3 years, appropriating the duration of the love potion Tristan and Yseult famously drunk while sailing back to Cornwall, bounding them "eternally" together. As reads a paper taped on the marble table: "in our society unity appears as accidental and separation as normal".

Both Orlandi's and Wohlhauser's work is preceded by an interest in overlapping and coexisting narratives. As a result, their artistic practice is multi-layered and should be approached bit-by-bit, layer-by-layer; just like peeling an orange.

¹Charles Baudelaire, "To Arsène Houssaye", in *"Le Spleen de Paris"*, 1869