Palinsesti

PALINSESTI 2019

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PREMIO IN SESTO 2019

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Lorenzo Missoni

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9th November 2019 – 19th January 2020
San Vito al Tagliamento (PN)

A project by Giorgia Gastaldon

TU CHE MI GUARDI
curated by Giorgia Gastaldon and Michele Tajariol, in collaboration with Alice Debianchi
Castello

IN CON TRA
curated by Giada Centazzo
Castello

PREMIO IN SESTO 2019
curated by Michela Lupieri
Antiche Carceri

PUNTO FERMO: Lorenzo Missoni
curated by Antonio Garlatti
Essiccatoio Bozzoli

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www.palinsesti.org

It is with great pleasure that I present the new and fascinating edition of Palinsesti 2019 - *Festival of Contemporary Art*, which today has reached its twenty-eighth year of activity. The purpose of this high-level scientific initiative has always been to combine contemporary art and history: on the one hand, by promoting and enhancing some of the most prestigious historic buildings in San Vito al Tagliamento, which are inhabited by contemporary art during the festival; and, on the other hand, through the selection of the various subjects chosen every year. The curators of the present edition – opening at the turn of 2019 and 2020 – have successfully fulfilled their task by focusing the attention of the festivals' main exhibition on the relevant subject of the current state of women's issues, put on display in the rooms of the ancient castle of San Vito Tagliamento. Fifty years after 1969-1970, the two-year period which was fundamental for the development of feminist consciousness in our country, the Festival actually presents its audience with a moment of critical reflection on topics such as the presence, the absence and the equal representation of women in the world of art, and, to a further extent, in society as a whole. Although these themes prove relevant for everybody, they become even more meaningful if we consider the great participation of "young people" in this event, also thanks to the organisation of long-lasting activities especially dedicated to schools of all levels. The event is certainly not limited to this appointment, as all the other initiatives marking the calendar of *Palinsesti* and the town have been confirmed. For this reason, it is important to mention the enhancement given to *Punto Fermo,* San Vito al Tagliamento's permanent collection, whose general catalogue was published in 2018, followed today by a second and no less important publication: a booklet resulting from the Festival's curation team's research and writings, centred on the study of the first ten editions of the *in Sesto Prize*. The exhibition put on display in the rooms of the Fondazione *Furlan* (Pordenone), a ten-year partner of *Palinsesti* itself, is dedicated to the winning projects of the first ten editions of the *Prize,* today at its eleventh competition with a new selection of international artists.

Mayor of San Vito al Tagliamento
Antonio di Bisceglie

PALINSESTI
2019

Giorgia Gastaldon

With its rich program of exhibitions and events, *Palinsesti – Festival of Contemporary Art 2019* has reached its fourteenth edition. This year, numerous national and international artists are involved at four prestigious venues around San Vito al Tagliamento.

As is custom, the main event of the festival is characterised by research and experimentation. At the ancient castle of the town, visitors can admire *"Tu che mi guardi" ("You, who are looking at me"),* a collective exhibition project which investigates the relationship between women, feminism and art on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the *"Manifesto di Rivolta Femminile" (Manifesto of Feminine Revolt)*. Anna Pontel, Letizia Scarpello and Julia Schuster, who are actively involved in similar, but at the same time, diverse causes, take part in the exhibit with their artworks, dealing with all the topics that an exhibition devoted to the relationship between feminism and art should and must address.
Curators Giorgia Gastaldon and Michele Tajariol invite visitors to meditate upon the role of women in today's society and in the world of contemporary art by sharing with them the study and research materials they consulted to give form to the exhibition.
As a corollary to this initiative, an artistic performance by Anna Pontel will be scheduled in partnership with Studio Faganel of Gorizia during the festival. For the third year in a row, ***Palinsesti*** supports the enactment of a contemporary art show, upholding the excellent regional representatives of this field and allowing them to create projects that will be repeated in other exhibitions.
The *Essicatoio Bozzoli* (a former silkworm cocoon drying room) hosts the exhibition of the town's contemporary art collection, *Punto Fermo,* put together in 2011 in order to celebrate the 20th anniversary of *Palinsesti*. Its aim, pursued ever since, was to conserve and incorporate all the contemporary artworks produced in Friuli Venezia-Giulia as part of a museum, since the public galleries were and are facing a deep economic crisis. In 2014, the top floor of the *Essicatoio Bozzoli* was thus designated as the permanent location for the *Punto Fermo* collection and it is now possible to admire the artworks of the artists who took part in the latest edition of *Palinsesti* there. This year, the protagonist is Lorenzo Missoni, with a solo exhibition curated by Antonio Garlatti.

The *In Sesto Prize*, curated by Michela Lupieri, confirms its annual appointment at the *Antiche Carceri* (the old jail of San Vito al Tagliamento). The selected artists of the eleventh edition, Elisa Caldana, Marlene Hausegger and Ištvan Išt Huzjan, come from three areas belonging to the Alpe-Adria Euroregion: Friuli Venezia-Giulia, Austria and Slovenia, respectively. According to the *Prize*'s consolidated formula, the three artists present a sculpture or an installation project intended for a public area in San Vito al Tagliamento.

Visitors are invited to express their preferences by voting, thus deciding which artwork will be developed during the course of 2020. The winning project will be permanently installed, becoming part of the city's artistic heritage.

During the festival, the projects and artworks of the previous winners of the past editions (Massimo Poldelmengo, Marotta&Russo, Anna Pontel, Gianni Pignat, Guerrino Dirindin, Bruno Fadel, Michele Spanghero, Ida Blažičko, Mathilde Caylou and Nataša Sienčnik) will be on display at the Fondazione Furlan (Pordenone) in order to celebrate the ten year anniversary of the *Prize*. A new catalogue, curated by Antonio Garlatti and Giorgia Gastaldon, gathers all the information about each artwork that has been carried out during these ten years. This catalogue, together with the one recently written in 2018, give an overview of all the contemporary works which have been installed in San Vito al Tagliamento thanks to *Palinsesti*.

TU CHE MI GUARDI

Giorgia Gastaldon

Long afterward, Oedipus, old and blinded,
walked theroads. He smelled a familiar smell.
It was the Sphinx. Oedipus said, "I want to ask
one question. Why didn't I recognize my mother?"
"You gave the wrong answer," said the Sphinx.
"But that was what made everything possible," said Oedipus.
"No," she said. "When I asked, What walks on four legs
in the morning, two at noon, and three in the evening,
you answered, Man. You didn't say anything about woman."
"When you say Man," said Oedipus,
"you include women too. Everyone knows that."
She said, "That's what you think."

Muriel Rukeyser, Myth, 1973

The exhibition *Tu che mi guardi (You, who are looking at me)* borrows its title from an essay about the philosophy of narration by Adriana Cavarero *Tu che mi guardi, tu che mi racconti* (literally meaning: *You who are looking at me, you who are narrating me).* Starting from and interpreting Hannah Arendt's theories, Cavarero talks about the so-called *Ulysses paradox*: "the situation in which someone receives his own story from another's narration"[1]. In other words, we are the protagonists but not the authors of our own life. For the past few centuries, this paradox has defined the way femininity is perceived: women have always been described through the male gaze of painters, novelists, historians or essayists. With the iconic *Do women have to be naked to get into the Met Museum?* - a set of thirty posters made in 1989 whose aim was that of exposing sexual and racial discrimination in the art world - *Guerrilla Girls*, a collective of feminist artists and activists, pointed out that women did not have an active role in the field of visual arts: they always posed as models and almost never were paintresses or sculptresses themselves[2].

As some may argue, things have definitely changed over the past few years, thanks to feminist groups who, particularly during 1969 and 1970, raised public awareness about their need to have their voice heard. These organizations spontaneously came together with the aim to "give voice" to women, thus allowing their full involvement in public life and utter control over their private one[3]. Feminists stood up against the concepts of "patriarchism" and "sexism" and their ideas gained a foothold in the world of culture which was one of the main fields where gender discrimination developed[4].

1 A. Cavarero, *Tu che mi guardi, tu che mi racconti. Filosofia della narrazione*, 1997, p. 28. The essay was originally translated as *Relating narratives: storytelling and selfhood* and published by Routledge in 2000.

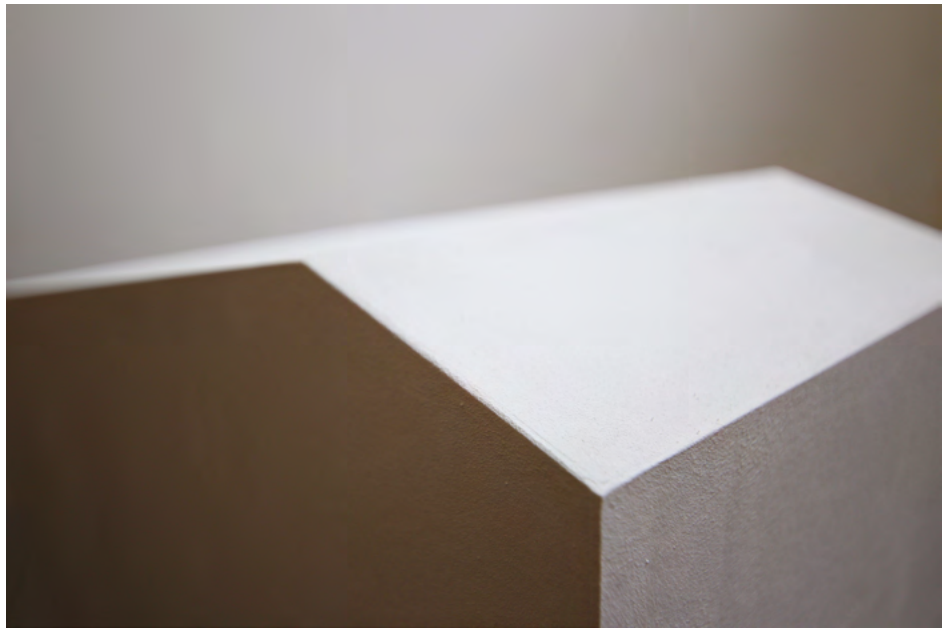
2 In the subtitle of their work, Guerrilla Girls – who call themselves the "conscience of the art world" – stated that «Less than 5% of the artists in the Modern Art Sections are women, but 85% of the nudes are female», https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/guerrilla-girls-do-women-have-to-be-naked-to-get-into-the-met-museum-p78793 (link last visited on September 20th 2019). See also Guerrilla Girls, *Confessions of the Guerrilla Girls by the Guerrilla Girls (whoever they really are)*, 1995, pp. 60-61.

3 It is almost impossible to give a unique and univocal definition of "feminism", but we can provide a concise description of the term: «the opposition to patriarchy and to the cultural and symbolic order founded on hierarchical distinctions and on the supremacy of men over women», E. Missana, *Donne si diventa. Antologia del pensiero femminista*, 2014, p. 9. Where not stated otherwise, all translations are ours.

4 «It is culture that neutralises these ideas, that makes socially prescribed gender distinctions appear to be natural qualities», M. Hatt, C. Klonk, *Feminism*, 2006, p. 148.

It is no coincidence that the authors of the most relevant Italian feminist manifesto, *Manifesto di Rivolta Femminile (Manifesto of Feminine Revolt),* was written in 1970 by painter Carla Accardi, art critic and historian Carla Lonzi, and Elvira Banotti[5]. Fifty years later, the issues raised by ***Palinsesti*** on the "condition of contemporary art" seem appropriate, since its main field of interest is to represent contemporaneity as a general category and its application to the world of art in particular.

Tu che mi guardi has two curators, a woman and a man, and displays the works of three female artists. We are aware that the choice of having a women-only exhibition can raise some doubts, but it was something inevitable and natural at the same time.
We asked ourselves and we will ask the visitors the same questions which Maura Reilly once asked herself: «Do women-only exhibitions give women a visibility that will lead to their fuller



Anna Pontel, *Casa*, 2019 (detail)
passepartout paper and mural painting, 88x105x38 cm

integration within a broader discourse? Do they address, and possibly assist in, correcting the gender inequity in the art world? Or, rather, do these exhibitions position women as outsiders, separate, and forever unequal? »[6].

In order to make the audience better understand and try to give an answer to these questions, the curators decided to share with the visitors the study and

5 See *Sputiamo su Hegel, La donna clitoridea e la donna vaginale e altri scritti*, *Scritti di Rivolta Femminile*, Milano 1974. The *Manifesto of Feminine Revolt* stated, among other things, that «a man's strength dwells in his identification with culture, our strength dwells in rejecting it». The third author, Elvira Banotti, besides being a feminist activist was also a long-time journalist and writer.
6 M. Reilly, *Havens or Prisons: Are women-only exhibitions still needed?*, p. 1. Maura Reilly is the curator and founder of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum in New York.

research materials they consulted to give form to the exhibition: philosophical texts, scientific articles, quotes from literature and television as well as statistical surveys. These in particular are extremely important: unquestionable numerical data point out that gender inequality still afflicts the world of contemporary art to this day. In an article entitled *Taking the Measure of Sexism: Facts, Figures and Fixes* (2015), Reilly demonstrates that there still is a

Julia Schuster, *Cycle*, 2018
clay, MDF, acrylic, 180x180x16 cm

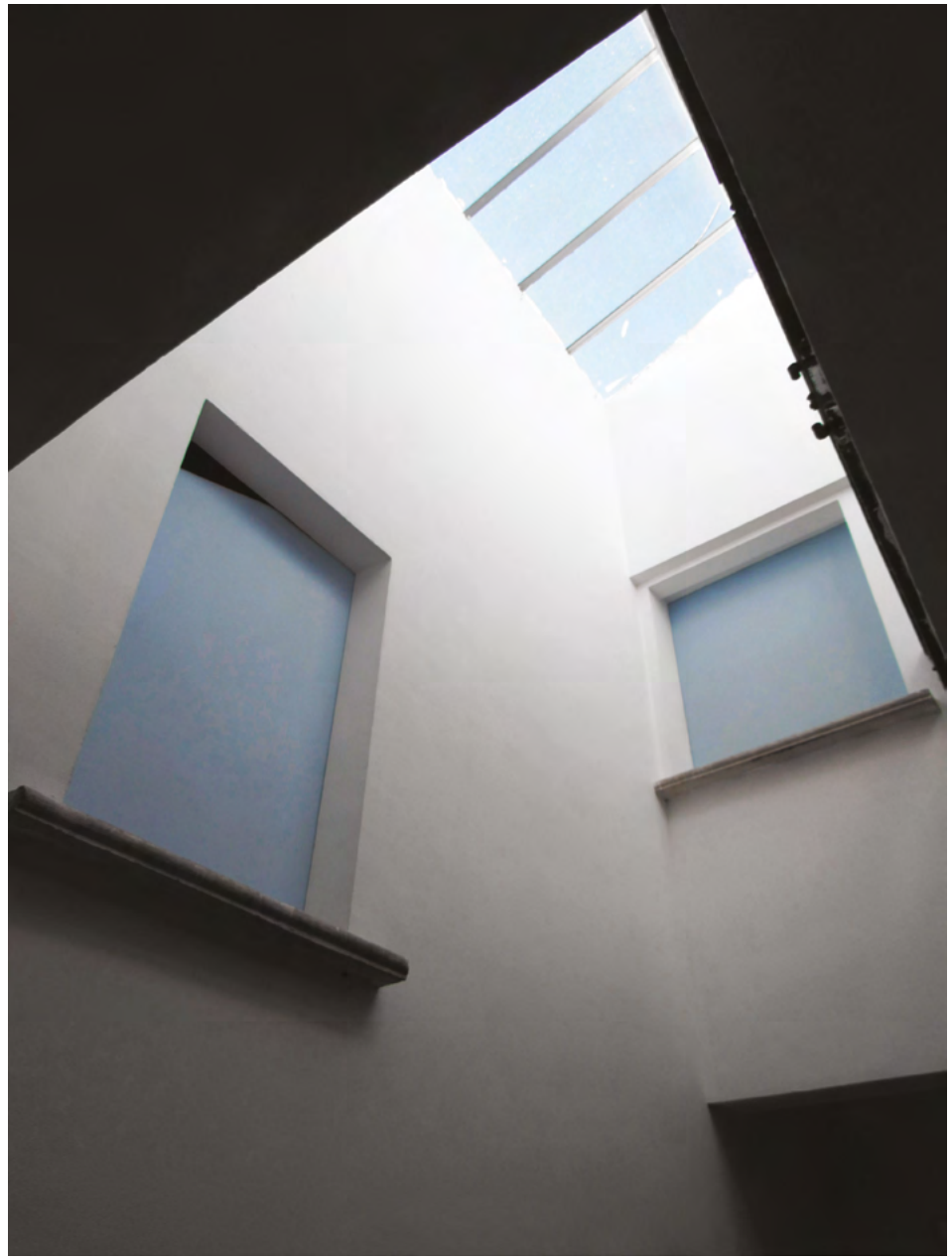
long way to go before the achievement of gender equality, even in the western world: «despite encouraging signs of women's improved status and visibility in the art world, there are still major systematic problems. (...) Women
artists are in a far better position today than they were 45 years ago, when Linda Nochlin wrote her landmark essay *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?* (...) but inequality persists. The common refrain that "women are treated equally in the art world now" needs to

be challenged».[7] Reilly herself carried out a survey on the presence of women in exhibitions, art galleries, auction houses, private collections, mass media advertisement and museums (both in personal exhibits and permanent collections) which displayed how female artists, curators and managers are still victims of discrimination[8].

> A similar survey recently conducted in Italy shows more or less the same results: «except for the academies, where there is a majority of female students», also in our country there is a «significant discrepancy between the presence of women compared to that of men in every field examined»; in addition to that, «women struggle more than men to make an advance in their career»[9]. The 2018 report *Donne Artiste in Italia. Presenza e Rappresentazione (Female Artists in Italy. Presence and Representation)* states that even though 67% of the students attending art schools[10] are women, only 26% of them are represented in contemporary art galleries and exhibitions dedicated by public and private Italian institutions to female artists during the course of 2017, constituting only 19% of the total[11]. Katrin Hassler commented that «these kinds of surveys contribute to clarifying the hypothesis and the "fine words" used to describe the effect that gender has on art» and «the only way to overcome gender inequality is to make people aware of its existence»[12].

The discrimination towards women and the need for change are two of the reasons why we decided to create this exhibition, and we think that having three female artists "talking about" such delicate matters as gender discrimination and femininity through their artworks is the most appropriate thing to do. As Lucy Lippard suggested in 1971, a women-only exhibition not only represents a critical element – no one would ask themselves the same questions while visiting one of the many men-only expositions – but also tries to neutralize the predominant discriminatory tendencies[13].
In the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the two-year period of 1969-70, proved so important for women's emancipation and for the development of feminism, especially in Italy, ***Palinsesti*** presents an exhibition that aims to question today's gender discrimination. Of course, this is not a unique idea, as during the past few years people have become more aware and started to educate themselves on these topics. Furthermore, there are many initiatives against gender-based violence: from those promoted by organizations called *Se non ora quando* (Italian for *If not now, when*) and *Non una di meno* (Italian for *Not one less*) to the international movement *#MeToo* and the accusations against Donald Trump. Both the issue of feminism and the fight against climate change are the main topics discussed in the press: as they did fifty years ago, young people and women are taking to the streets to demonstrate and to claim their rights. These movements are bringing changes also in the world of literature, television

7 M. Reilly, *Taking the Measure of Sexism: Facts, Figures and Fixes*, p. 40.
8 To learn more about the gender gap among American museum directors see the report *The Gender Gap in Art Museum Directorship,* commissioned in 2014 by the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD), cf. H. M. Sheets, *Study Finds a Gender Gap at the Top Museums*, 2014.
9 S. Simoncelli, C. Iacquinta, E. Vannini, *Introduzione*, in *Donne artiste in Italia, Presenza e rappresentazione*, 2018, p. 14.
10 Data given by MIUR (Ministry of Education, University and Research) concerning the academic year 2016-1017, in *Donne artiste in Italia, Presenza e rappresentazione*, 2018, pp. 48-49.
11 *Ibid*, pp. 50-51 e 54-55.
12 K. Hassler, *Gender and art. Statistics and position at the top in the international field*, *ibid*, p. 39
13 «The restriction to women's art (...) as a framework within which to exhibit good art, it is no more restrictive than, say, exhibitions on German, Cubist, black and white, soft, young or new art». With these words, curator L. Lippard commented on her exhibition *26 Contemporary Women Artists* (The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut, 1971), now in M. Reilly, *Havens or Prisons: Are women-only exhibitions still needed?*, p. 4.



Letizia Scarpello, *Diserta*, 2016-2019
foam on various surfaces, life size dimensions

and cinema, where one-dimensional and sexualized female characters are being replaced by more complex and diverse heroines, architects of their own fate. These materials are shared with the audience who, after having seen the exhibition, can meditate upon these matters and maybe listen to a podcast called «girls your mother would not have approved of» - as if to underline the fact that often women are those who reinforce gender stereotypes through upbringing and by dragging down other women – or reading dystopian novels which allude to gender equality as a mere utopia[14].

It is within this context that Anna Pontel, Letizia Scarpello and Julia Schuster take part in this exhibition after being asked to ponder the criticism levelled at the system of contemporary art as we know it today, and the woman's body as subject and as an object and the possibility of a new and fundamental matriarchy.
Painsesti does not want to provide the audience with answers, but its main purpose is to make visitors ask questions of themselves, so that women and men, students and children will leave the castle with doubts, uncertainties and internal turmoil.

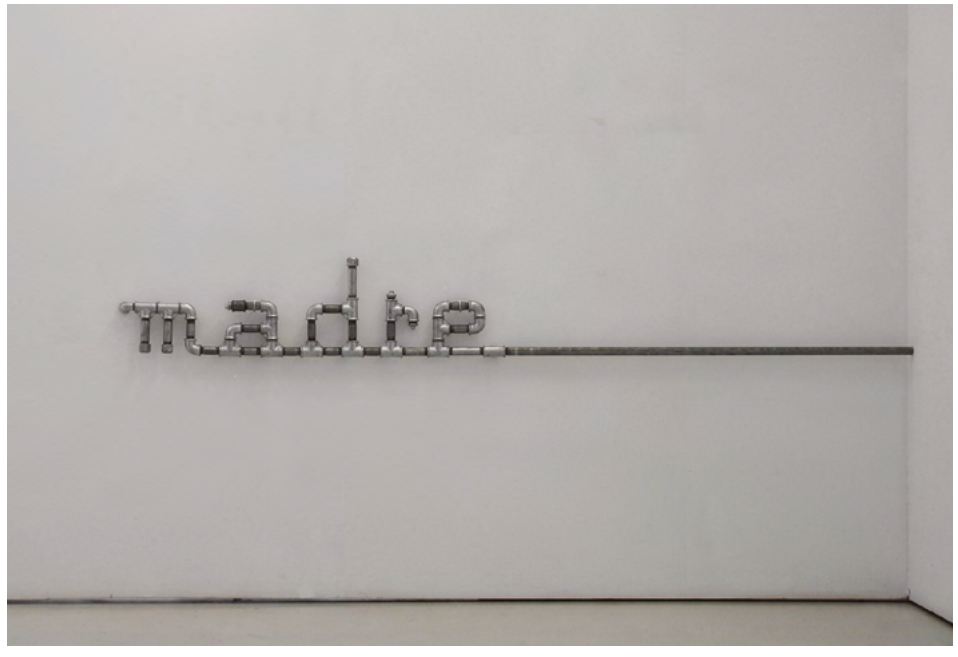
14 M. Murgia, *Morgana. Storie di ragazze che tua madre non avrebbe approvato*, http://storielibere.fm/morgana/. As mentioned, the title of this podcast translates from Italian as: *Stories of girls your mother would not have approved of*. A book was also published: M. Murgia, C. Tagliaferri, *Morgana*, 2019. The novel which started the ten-year-old tradition of dystopian literature written by women is *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood (1985), whose sequel, *The Testaments* (2019), was published last September.. See also *The Power* by Naomi Alderman (2016).

ANNA PONTEL

In this year's edition of the festival, Anna Pontel meditates on the two emblematic images of motherhood and the family circle through two evocative works, intimately connected to her recent and past artistic production. *Madre* (2015, meaning 'mother' in Italian) is an installation made with pipes and zinc-coated steel junctions joined together in order to create the word "madre", which is the title of the work. It is made to be adjusted from time to time so it can always fit into its surroundings. The work was generated from a rapid association of ideas and stands out as a visual oxymoron in which sign and meaning, signified and signifier interact with each other, opening the doors for a unique imagery. The cold hard steel, usually the non-organic container of a driven flux, does not reconcile with the typical idea of motherhood. With this work, the artist wants to push the observer into pondering every nuance and facet of the theme of motherhood, making room for mixed feelings. As a matter of fact, in this work, the mother is not intended as the person who has conceived and given birth to another human being, but, disregarding gender, is seen in wider terms as origin, source, cause, principle and foundation. Thanks to its uniqueness and peculiar shape, the work, composed of modular elements assembled into one structure, becomes part of Pontel's creative *corpus*, reconnecting with her previous works such as *Pony Tail* (2001) or *Pic Nic Set* (2001) also characterized by an iron thread core.

Casa (2019, meaning 'house' in Italian) is a new original work instead, inspired by an autobiographical element through which the artist narrates her story to the audience. Indeed, she reconstructs all the rooms of her childhood house through fourteen small-scale volumes. This atypical model presents a change of direction taking place between the perimeter walls and the interior spaces, where the void becomes full and vice versa. The real walls dematerialize and become air, while the air in the room takes the form of cardboard solids painted in white. It is a symbolic and metaphorical reconstruction of her domestic environment, where every single volume bears a personal and intimate experience with the attempt of "giving shape to what has shaped her". The house is simplified, abstract, lacking any personal reference, and with its essential style becomes a white canvas onto which the audience can project their emotions.

[GC]



Anna Pontel, *Madre*, 2015-2019
pipes and hydraulic junctions, 200x95x55 cm

LETIZIA SCARPELLO

The aesthetic research of Letizia Scarpello hinges on several recurring and relevant themes, such as the concepts of space and relationships as systems of communication. It also questions issues regarding the current organization of the system of contemporary art. Through the power of her art, which is a balanced mix of aesthetic appeal, satire and subtle provocation, the artist tries to question stereotypes and cliches. The choice of the textiles employed hints at her origins: from her childhood, spent at her family's historical upholstery shop, to her studies of scenography and fashion design.

The set of installations called *Why do things have to be so hard #1* (2017) is still a work in progress. The title comes from an article Scarpello read in a magazine, which quotes the words written by a Japanese girl to her mother before committing suicide due to the excessive work schedule she was coping with. At Palinsesti 2019, the artist displays a triptych which consists of sculptural graftings, made of iron thread covered with foam, applied onto a copy of "Mousse Magazine" - a well-known quarterly contemporary art magazine. The artwork is a critique of the media and the publishing platforms which only focus on visual impact at the expense of the artists' souls and dedication to their artworks. At the same time, it is a form of dissent towards the new digital trends of art. The magazine, which is turned into an object, now has a new meaning: the medium of (un)critical (mis)information becomes a means through which Scarpello invites the reader to ponder the social side of art, the way in which it is represented in today's society, the conditions in which the artists work nowadays, the relationship between participants and experts in the field and art's relationship with its recipients.

In the site-specific installation *Diserta* (2016-2019), the rooms of the castle of San Vito al Tagliamento are covered with foam created specifically for that purpose. These nearly imperceptible but well-thought-out interventions highlight specific parts of the building. The audience is led to look at the place from a different perspective and their gaze follows unpredictable and unusual trajectories. The artist tries to educate the observer's eye, and he/she is asked to overcome stereotypes concerning artistic and spatial fruition.

[GC]

Letizia Scarpello, *Why do things have to be so hard #1*, 2017-2019
"Mousse Magazine" n. 54, iron thread and black foam, 40x30x30 cm

JULIA SCHUSTER

Julia Schuster is an interdisciplinary artist whose work moves among sculpture, installation, and performance and who has elevated ceramic to her main *medium*.
Chosen for its extreme versatility and the sensory pleasure derived from the manipulation of clay, ceramic is appreciated by the artist both for its connection to the earth and because it shapes, both physically and conceptually, Schuster's interest in themes such as vital cycles, natural rhythms, ancestral rites, and ritualities. By putting materiality at the centre of her work, Julia Schuster invites us to grasp the connections existing among body, substance, thought, and emotions.

Cycle (2018) is a wall-mounted circular installation composed of twenty-eight concave vessels laid on half spheres. The earthenware containers have been crafted with a potter's wheel that recalls, with its characteristic circular movement, the circle motif that lies at the basis of this artwork. The single elements are morphologically similar, however, they feature slight variations in their shapes which make the artwork an allusion to both lunar phases and the phases of the female menstrual cycle. Schuster creates a symbolic image of this perpetual and immutable vital cycle beyond stigmas and prejudices. An homage to the feminine element, *Cycle* is mostly an exaltation of the mystery of the human body as the place where life is generated.

The artwork *Gendered Postures* (2014) investigates how body positions are molded and influenced by the gender notions we acquire from our surrounding environment. The single pieces were made by the artist by filling balloons of different dimensions with liquid plaster, which were then placed onto or between specific body parts in a given pose and kept motionless until the plaster was completely hardened. The physical strength which was necessary to hold these postures to mold the sculptural objects alludes to the social pressure to which both sexes are historically subjected.
This project by Schuster is inspired by American philosopher Judith Butler's theories on gender "performance" and construction of corporeity, according to which one is/has not simply a body, but "creates one's (own) body". Moreover, our body cannot be conceived of as a mere biological entity disconnected from the socio-cultural context.
With *Gendered Postures*, the artist tries to illustrate "gender performativity". Each element that belongs to the artwork refers to an "acted" body behaviour, which is to say, how men and women occupy space in different ways.

[GC]

Julia Schuster, *Gendered Postures* (*Closed legs*), 2014
plaster, 28x22x14 cm
Fine Art print on Hahnemühle 200 gsm matt, 28x42 cm

Julia Schuster, *Gendered Postures* (*Crossed arms*), 2014
plaster, 27x16x12 cm
Fine Art print on Hahnemühle 200 gsm matt, 28x42 cm

IN CON TRA

Giada Centazzo

What is the subject of a portrait? Nothing other than the subject itself, absolutely. Where does the subject have its truth and validity? Nowhere else but in the portrait. That is why there is only a subject in painting, just as there is only painting of the subject. In painting, the subject sinks to the bottom (it "returns to itself"); in the subject, painting surfaces (it exceeds the face). Thus emerging from out of a line, neither subject nor object but art, or the world.

Jean-Luc Nancy, Portrait, 2000

In her artistic research, Anna Pontel combines installations and visual artworks with site-specific performances. These occasions constitute a space of both thought and proximity for herself and the audience. On the occasion of *Palinsesti 2019,* the artist (re-)presents the performance *In con tra* (2017-2019) the title literally playing on the pun between the verb 'incontra', meaning 'to meet' and the three prepositions in which the word splits: in (in) con (with) tra (between) which is recontextualized in direct connection with the collective exhibition *Tu che mi guardi.*
As suggested by the title – a pun made of prepositions and etymological references borrowed from a fundamental 1997 text about the philosophy of narration by Adriana Cavarero *Tu che mi guardi, tu che mi racconti ('you, who are looking at me. you, who are narrating me')* – Pontel literally meets the audience during the artistic action for an atypical portrait session[1].

The subjects to be depicted are selected in a totally random way among the visitors attending the performance. The artist simply beckons to them, inviting them to take a seat on a chair placed in front of her, *vis-à-vis*, according to the traditional dynamics of portraiture. However, Pontel never takes her eyes off her subject during the whole execution. By means of this intense and continuous eye/sight contact with her subjects, Pontel establishes a silent yet intimate communication with them. The portrait is the result of this extemporaneous encounter. The emotive flow, generated in this creative setting by facing each other through gaze, guides the artist's hand in tracing a profile of the subject in an automatic way. As in a strange pantograph, the artist's eye and hand are interconnected. The hand reports what the eye sees. There is no intellectual operation that mediates between the phenomenal percept and its representation on paper.

The number of portraits varies from performance to performance and so does the duration of this crea(c)tive *tête-à-tête,* implying a certain, and desired, degree of randomness. Even the subjects' reactions are not predictable. Will they laugh? Will they talk? Will they avoid the artist's gaze? The other's reactions will in their turn affect the artist, contributing to the graphic result, which becomes a kind of seismography of the meeting in the making. On the other hand, nothing is left to chance in the – definitely sartorial – arrangement of the space where the action takes place. In her turn, the artist will be wearing an apron made for the occasion. It not only recalls the artisanship of her action, but especially alludes to those caregiving figures (mothers, nurses, etc.) that, with their "workwear" on, observe, often silent, vigilant, and loving.

The Italian word for portrait, "*ritratto*" comes from the Latin verb *retrahĕre*, which can also mean "to keep". In this way, it is possible to retrieve the value of this activity, through which something is traced «stroke by stroke»[2]. This something

1 The essay was originally translated into English and published in 2000 by Routledge as *Relating narratives: storytelling and selfhood.*
2 E. Pommier, Théories du portrait : De la Renaissance aux Lumières, 2003, pp. 6-7. Where not stated otherwise, translations are ours.

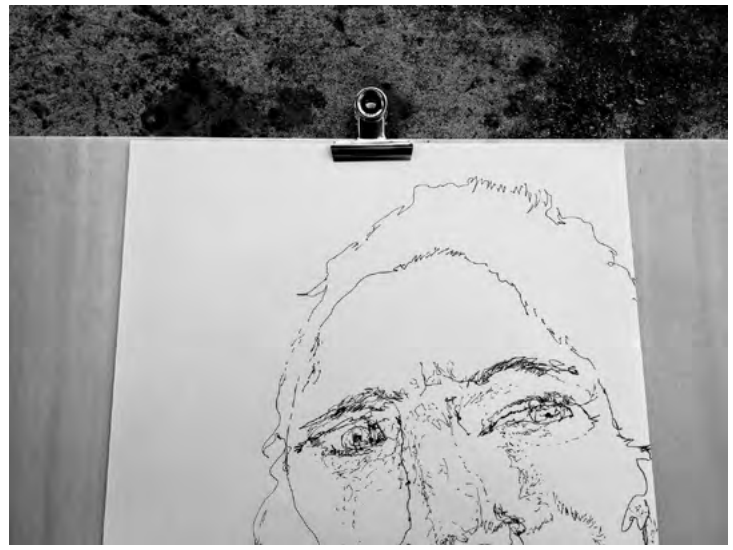
is usually the real referent of the representation, which is imitated or interpreted.
Even if she respects the most typical *modus operandi* of portraiture in the realization of these artworks, Pontel's action achieves a de-representative result. *Mimesis* is the first element to be missing – together with the constant eye movements and adjustments from the subject to the surface of the paper. The gaze therefore does not dominate reality; it does not arrange it and the paradigm of vision is compromised. Gaze is also kept in check in her artwork *Specchio cangiante* (2016, translatable as *Wavering mirror*), where the reflecting surface, which was opportunely fragmented by the artist, exposes us to a multiplication - «at least 362» - of viewpoints.

The experience of the relationship with the other is often at the centre of Anna Pontel's work as well. In the performance-installation *Con-tatto* (2015) a pun originating from the Italian word *"contatto"* (contact in English), which is divided into *"con"* (with) and *"tatto"* (touch) for example, the artist interacted with the audience through a handshake. This happened *"con tatto"* (with touch) due to her wearing a pair of coarse knit gloves which divided her from the other and, at the same time, stressed the paroxysmal gesture of getting closer in a sensory way.

The performance *In con tra* can also be read as a polite way to highlight the subversion of a phallocentric? – paradigm of representation: that which has historically seen women as objects to a male gaze that tames them in the portrait. They are «spectacle-images»[3] rather than subjects, «immobilized» within a domestic space, taking part «to the picture as passive objects»[4]. Things among things that therefore reflect their role in the historical-social context.
In this site-specific performance, Anna Pontel does not only put herself in the portraitist's place: she makes herself subject of the representation, in a specular exchange of roles, for a counter-speech.
If we wished to paraphrase Luce Irigaray's words, we could say that by stepping into the portraitist's shoes, Anna Pontel inserts herself into the discourse and performs what Irigaray calls the difference *(différence)*[5]. That is to say, playing the part of the enunciating subject, but in a critical way, by making the observing audience aware of it.

IN CON TRA
performance by Anna Pontel
curated by Giada Centazzo
in collaboration with studiofaganel Gorizia

3 «The representation of women as image (spectacle, object to be looked at, vision of beauty (...) and the concurrent representation of the female body as the locus of sexuality, site of visual pleasure or lure of the gaze is totally pervasive in our culture», T. de Laurentis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotic, Cinema*, 1984, p. 37.
4 «The nature of the placing of women and children in scenes of domestic interiors became clear. Strangely immobilized, they often participate in the painting as passive object, part of the inventory», L.R. Robinson, *Sex, Class and Culture*, 1978, p. 41.
5 L. Irigaray, *This sex which is not one*. Translated into English by Catherine Porter and Carolyn, Cornell University Press, 1985, pp. 78-80 (*Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un*, 1977).



PREMIO IN SESTO 2019

Elisa Caldana
Marlene Hausegger
Ištvan Išt Huzjan

Michela Lupieri

A monument dedicated to non-existent streets, an installation that subverts the functioning of a common object, a sculpture embodying the passing of time: these are the three original projects, different in terms of shapes and materials, conceived by the artists of the eleventh edition of the *In Sesto Prize: Place as art*.

During its ten years of activity, the *Prize* has had the ambition to trigger a dialogue between national and international contemporary artists, who are invited to present an artistic project for San Vito al Tagliamento. The winning project will be transformed into a public work of art permanently set up on the territory.

The *In Sesto Prize* is a unique and experimental part of *Palinsesti-Festival of Contemporary Art,* whose link with the place is expressed by the play on words between the two titles, explaining how one is the complement of the other. Yet the projects involved are quite different from one another. On the one hand, *Palinsesti*'s etymology refers to the process of writing and rewriting history, in this case the history of art: this purpose is visible through the exhibitions realized over the years, which seem to belong to an infinite and therefore unstoppable process. On the other hand, the ***Prize***, whose definition of "Place as Art", aims at putting an end to the process of creation, by directing the attention of the invited artists to a specific place in San Vito al Tagliamento and by asking them to think of a permanent project: a sculptural production or an installation for a public space in the town. Therefore, with the ***Prize,*** this process crystallizes into a tangible artistic shape which is available in its designated place. This is a special declaration of intent, because it makes public art one of the characteristics of this town. By promoting such a site-specific research, each installed work is indeed designed specifically for the place in which it is located, becoming a way of reading the history of the territory, its peculiarities and its geography. Therefore, art is inserted into the daily fabric of life in close dialogue with the community's spaces as much as the visitors of the exhibition at the *Antiche Carceri* share the choice for the work of art to be installed there every year. The public, called to vote on their favorite project, becomes an active part of the artistic process, which makes the *Prize* an expression of a participatory dynamic in which spectator, curator, selection committee, administration and artist collaborate for a common purpose.

The ten installations scattered today in the town represent its anchor points, spaces from which to start or to arrive for its exploration spanning from the garden behind the Chiesa dei Battuti to the Parco Rota, from the moat of the ancient walls to the courtyard of the castle, from the Essiccatoio Bozzoli to the courtyard of the Antiche Carceri, up to the place chosen for this year's projects: the green area between via Giovanni Fabrici, the Zuccheri family park, the Sante Ciani car park and the Essicatoio Bozzoli.

Elisa Caldana (Pordenone, 1986), Marlene Hausegger (Leoben, 1983) and Ištvan Išt Huzjan (Ljubljana, 1984) the invited artists, coming respectively from Friuli Venezia Giulia, Austria and Slovenia, three areas included in the Alpe-Adria Euroregion have created three public works for this place whose main characteristic is to be a direct expression of their personal research.

Monumento alle vie inesistenti (Monument to Non-existent roads) by Caldana celebrates the inventive power of the law in dealing with practical issues through poetic means. The artist refers to the fictitious streets that exist only on paper, invented by the Italian administration as a bureaucratic stratagem. The project is a monument consisting of a single track engraved with the 211 non-existent Italian roads and Via Girovagar, which has been invented for the town of San Vito al Tagliamento. Caldana's research investigates political and social contradictions and paradoxes, originating a plurality of actions and points of view. Her works are distinguished by the presence of an abstract and imaginative dimension that enriches them and leads the observer to a general reflection.

In a different way, *Distant rivers* by Marlene Hausegger is a kinetic installation subverting the function of a tool originally conceived to move water: the oar. Turned upside down and rotating on the top, it becomes a sculpture to contemplate. The use of a daily object is one of Hausegger's characteristic traits, who prefers simple materials such as adhesive tape, plaster or colour for her interventions. The use of an ironic, humorous and playful visual vocabulary is an expedient that allows her to re-contextualize the site and trigger shifts of meaning thanks to the mechanisms of artistic-historical quotation, reinterpretation and accentuation.

Finally, *Time Machine* by Ištvan Išt Huzjan is a sculpture that exceeds the human dimension and whose shape is half of a perfect circle. From a distance, the shiny and reflective surface makes it look like a luminous body, while upon closer look it is more like a mirror that allows the onlooker to approach the passing of time. Huzjan looks at artworks as utopian alchemical processes, capable of transforming a common element into a work of art. His projects are indeed journeys in time and space, as the result of a movement between material and immaterial, visual and experiential.

Elisa Caldana, *Sketch of one single continuous line for the monument to non-existent roads,2019*
graphite on paper carta, 42x59,4 cm

Marlene Hausegger, *distant rivers*, 2019
pencil and watercolour on paper, 42x29,7 cm

Ištvan Išt Huzjan, *Time Machine, 2019*
project render, untreated industrial aluminium sheet, 500x250x5 cm

PUNTO FERMO

Lorenzo Missoni

Quello che resta è l'indifferenza

Antonio Garlatti

Lorenzo Missoni's artistic journey is deeply linked to the research and creation of images which assume a mental value rather than a narrative one. Although in his work he uses everyday objects and tools perhaps perceived as almost ordinary in that they are commonly used they trigger new and uninterrupted processes of signification in the artist's poetic process. Any object with a specific function in reality loses its primary identity to assume other roles and meanings when inserted into a different and indefinite context. Missoni's language works as a sort of *ars combinatoria,* although not strictly so in Leibzinian terms, as it pursues a synesthetic and imaginative rather than a logical or analytical path.

Lorenzo Missoni, *Garden Hotel*, 2002
wood, fabric, iron, plastic, glass, sound, variable dimensions

Even though his works dating to the `90s, such as *Agostino* (1995), a sort of self-portrait with childlike male features, reveal something very intimate, private, and at the same time poetic, in *Erbari* (2000, meaning in Italian Herbaria) the artists' feelings and fascination for nature, combined with the analytical and classifying observation of phytomorphic beings, give life to fantastic plants and create new possible worlds. Therefore, the fleeting traces left by customers in *Hotels* (2003), stratified over time, although being fleeting, not only preserve the intimacy of many people' s passage, but also generate new experiences.In the project *L'enciclopedia* (2011-2016 - meaning in Italian *The encyclopedia*) - Missoni creates a travel journal by combining images collected from old encyclopedic volumes. A journey of memory, of so many *déjà vus* recorded through time by our mind, which, as they come to the surface, give life to new unique and subjective realities because each person's experience is different. On these photo *collages* the artist then enjoys highlighting details by using a sort of magnifying glass which does not aim at revealing new knowledge but giving new meaning to those images.

Books are constantly used in many works by Missoni, for example in *Stelle* (2011, meaning in Italian *Stars*) featuring constellations and new universes, which were not born from a "big bang" but originated from the simple juxtaposition of these everyday objects, or as *La risposta che volevi* (2011. Literally: *The answer you wanted*), in the *Punto Fermo* collection. This work, consisting of a staircase painted white where some cut volumes are inserted into the pages, seems to suggest that knowledge elevates us in cultural terms, helping us to climb step by step the ladder of knowledge which books help us to preserve and pass down. However, some quite legitimate questions arise: "Why do books rise up while we do not? And also, is it possible to read a book when it has been cut? Once again the artist catches us off guard and seems to suggest that "the limit of sight is at the origin of the vision". A feeling of curiosity accompanies the visitor who approaches the installation *Quello che resta è l'indifferenza* (meaning, in Italian, `What remains is indifference'), a site-specific installation created for the *Essiccatoio Bozzoli*. In the apparent emptiness of the large hall, something attracts one's attention. About fifty birds shaped from newspaper sheets are arranged on a white surface, resting on easels. The windows of the room are closed and obscured by clippings of articles recently published in the press. It is not known why this myriad of birds, laying in a state of *rigor mortis*, can be found in such an environment, once destined for silkworm cocoon processing. What is certain is that through this image, Missoni manages to disrupt our certainties. He prompts us to investigate and think. It seems that those birds scattered on the table have lost their primary function of flying, of hovering free in the sky, crossing borders, migrating. That would be nature's desire, but it is not man's will. Uncertain rumours of recent news are filtering from the newspapers stuck to the windows: closure of borders, drifting castaways, uncertain landings, fear of the other, of what is different from us. It thus seems that Missoni is asking us to reconsider our relationships, the relationships we have with people, especially those we have with people we don't know, and the indifference that pervades us, because, as the philosopher Martin Buber reminds us: "Genuine conversation, and therefore every actual fulfillment of relations between men, means acceptance of otherness. [...] Human life and humanity come into being in genuine meetings. There, man learns not merely that he is limited by man, cast upon his own finitude, partialness, need of completion, but his own relation to truth is heightened by the other's different relation to the same truth different in accordance with his individuation and destined to take seed and grow differently. Men need, and it is granted to them, to confirm one another in their individual being by means of genuine meetings. But beyond this, they need-and it is granted to them-to see the truth, which the soul gains by its struggle, light up to the others, the brothers,in a different way, and even so be confirmed»[1].

Lorenzo Missoni, *Erbario possibile*, 1999
photographic print, 20x30 cm

Lorenzo Missoni, *L'enciclopedia*, 2011-2016
collage, 21x30,6x3,8 cm

Lorenzo Missoni, *Stelle*, 2011
books, variable dimensions

1 M. Buber, *Distance and Relation*, 1950, in A.D. Biemann, *The Martin Buber Reader. Essential Writings*, Palgrave Macmillan; 2002, pp. 206-2013, p. 211.

Lorenzo Missoni, *Quello che resta è l'indifferenza,* 2019
wood, papier-mâché, duct tape, newspapers,
variable dimensions

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