

Bruna Esposito What Can Smoke do to Iron?

Sassi, seggiole e sonagli, 2007-2015



Curatorship: Benedetta Casini

**FROM
MARCH 13**

Wednesday to Sunday from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. Free admission

MUNTREF CENTRO DE ARTE Y NATURALEZA. VENUE ECOPAQUE (EX-ZOO)

Av. Sarmiento 2725, CABA.



The MUNTREF, which was founded in 2002, is a social and political outreach project of the UNTREF from an artistic and cultural perspective. As such, at every moment it reports on problems such as the gender issues today, in order to contribute positively to the process of accelerating equality.

Once again, for this reason, we started the year by dedicating ourselves to putting on stage the work of women artists who have not yet had a monographic exhibition in our country. We did this, for example, with the Brazilian Anna Bella Geiger (2018), the French-Moroccan Leila Alaoui (2018), the Polish Angelika Markul (2018), the Peruvian Claudia Coca (2018), the Argentinian Marina De Caro (2018), the Brazilian-Argentinean Carla Zaccagnini (2019) and the American Martha Rosler (2019).

We also dedicate our efforts to focus on the work of artists to whom an exposition would not have been dedicated, or have been absent for many years, as was the case with Gertrudis Chale's (2007) anthological exhibitions, Marcia Schwarz (2008), Raquel Forner (2013), Graciela Sacco (2014 and a tribute in 2018), and Annemarie Heinrich (2014). All of them were the result of long research and management projects. On the other hand, the research and production of collective exhibitions such as *Migrations (in) Contemporary Art* (2015), among others, led us to reinforce this path presenting mostly female artists works.

Today, in 2020, we choose to continue this tradition by presenting *Constellations. A Selection of Works from the FRAC Collections* at the MUNTREF Museo de Artes Visuales. A project organized from a series



In teca / In Box, 2011

Wood, hooks, onion skin, acrylic

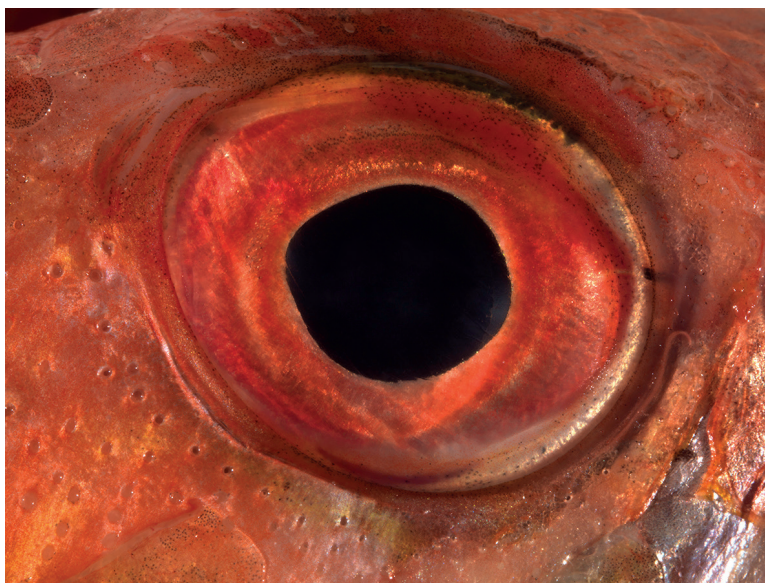
Courtesy: Federico Luger (FL GALLERY)
and the artist

of micronarrations linked to aesthetics and contemporary works by Estefanía Peñafiel, Ymane Fakir and Kapwani Kiwanga. Meanwhile, at the MUNTREF Centro de Arte y Naturaleza, we present works by Bruna Esposito, an Italian artist whose work is centered on the four elements; furthermore, at the MUNTREF Centro de Arte Contemporáneo, the halls are occupied by the works of Italian conceptual artist forerunner of relational art Maria Lai, the outstanding Chilean photographer Julia Toro and the powerful artist from Tucuman Carlota Beltrame. In all cases - and continuing with our "art for all" - it is the first time that an exhibition dedicated to each of them is displayed in the varied public eye of Buenos Aires.

I would like to thank the joint effort carried out with the MAXXI-Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo in Rome and the support of the Italian Council, as well as that of the Italian Embassy in Argentina. I also thank the collaboration of the FRAC, the French Institute and the French Embassy in Argentina and the collaboration of the House of the Province of Tucumán in Buenos Aires.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the enormous work of the MUNTREF team led by Dr. Diana Wechsler, artistic director of the MUNTREF and BIENALSUR, which allows to move forward with these ambitious projects. This sum of effort allows us to enjoy the experience offered by these wonderful artists.

Aníbal Y. Jozami
Rector UNTREF
Director General MUNTREF



The first words which can describe the essence of Bruna Esposito's art are Experience, Encounter, Relationship. In 2017 the artist literally enchanted the visitors of the MAXXI with the installation *e così sia...* (so be it...) in which the creative act becomes a ritual which symbolizes the passing of time, the action of remembering, through a seed mandala that reflects on the ambiguity of the image. Artist of international fame, with the exhibition *What Can Smoke do to Iron?* Esposito presents her work for the first time in Argentina and we are very proud to have been the promoters of this opportunity that expands even more her international horizon. We thank Aníbal Jozami and Diana Wechsler for grasping the extraordinary opportunity of carrying out such an articulated project to promote the Italian art in Latin America.

Along with Bruna Esposito's, the great retrospective dedicated to Maria Lai achieved thanks to the support of Directorate General for Contemporary Creativity of the Italian Ministry for Cultural Heritage, Activities and Tourism will be on display at the MUNTREF Centro de Arte Contemporáneo. Although distant in terms of age and experiences, Lai and Esposito are linked by a way of understanding art as a device within relationship and by a language that resorts to the rites and simple materials of daily life. In line with the action of many museums and international institutions and in addition to the satisfaction of promoting abroad the knowledge of the most important artists of the Italian panorama, we support the rediscovery and enhancement of these great female voices in contemporary art.

Bartolomeo Pietromarchi
Director MAXXI

LEFT

Occhi / Eyes, 2016

Photography. Lambda print on aluminum

Courtesy: Federico Luger (FL GALLERY) and the artist

BELOW

Allegro non troppo, 2017

Installation. Hammocks (tied up), orange tissue paper, white tissue paper, blue plastic, pine needles, cold mix asphalt, two trays, hula hop

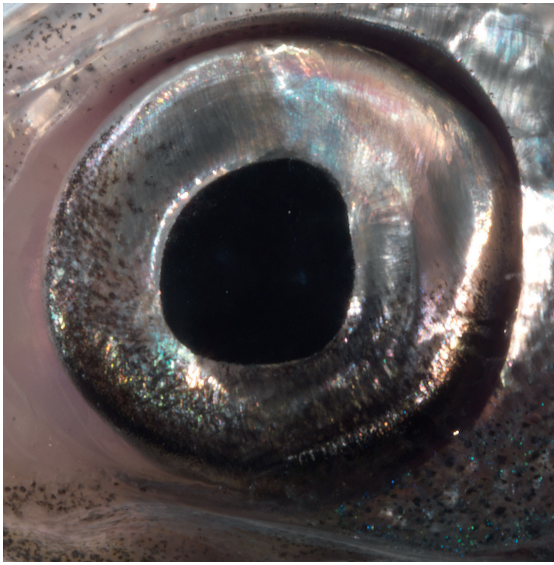
Courtesy: Studio Stefania Miscetti and the artist

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Bruna Esposito is one of the most prominent voices in Italian contemporary art, with vast international repercussions, and is among the most eclectic ones in the use of language and media. Diverse disciplines - music, dance and literature - intervene in her artistic production converging in harmonic compositions, often complemented by olfactory and sound elements. The titles of her installations (*Allegro non troppo*, *Winds of Revolt* or *Revolt of the Winds*, *Ultramar*)

underline these contaminations between related languages and introduce conceptual allusions that expand her semantic universe. *What Can Smoke do to Iron?* is her first individual exhibition in Argentina, for which the MUNTREF Centro de Arte y Naturaleza has been configured as a succession of autonomous and interconnected spaces. The approach to the concept of nature that defines each environment is poetic: organic materials are combined with everyday objects, giving





them new meaning. Nature as an artificial construction - minuscule straw balls patiently assembled by beach beetles - and the artifice as a natural act of rattlesnakes clinging to chairs like molluscs to wet rocks - establish a fluid exchange and questions the rigidity of dichotomous categorization. At the same time, affective resonances and sensory qualities accentuate the intimate and personal character of the works that challenge the viewer in an exclusive dialogue.

Reflecting on the future of the species, Bruna mentions “crossbreeding” as the only possibility of survival: perhaps this concept is valid when thinking about the horizon of the arts as well. The combination of opposites expresses the need to rethink what is taken for granted, to establish a new “unbalanced balance”, such as the one revealed in the link between the delicacy of a pearl and the roughness of a plummet, between the rusticity of bamboo brooms and the preciousness of the marble bases that support them. In the wefts of Bruna Esposito's works it is possible to perceive a militant sensibility, a radical softness that vindicates fragility, subtlety, melancholy and pause as necessary moments that precede a transformation. In that sense, stones, chairs and bells, which consists of two half-faced and empty chairs that receive the public at the entrance of the museum suggesting the possibility of infinite silent dialogues, can be apprehended. Behind these assumptions, the opacity of the title of the exhibition is clarified and the rhetorical question that constitutes it ends up suggesting an unexpected and affirmative answer.

Benedetta Casini
Curator



¹ Words of the artist.

ABOVE RIGHT

Occhi / Eyes, 2016

Photography. Lambda print on aluminum

Courtesy: Private collection, Milan, Italy

LEFT BELOW

Perla a Piombo / Plumb with Pearl, 2003

Plummet, cotton thread, white pearl

Courtesy: Federico Luger (FL GALLERY) and the artist

List of works

Allegro non troppo, 2017

Installation. Hammocks (tied up), orange tissue paper, white tissue paper, blue plastic, pine needles, cold mix asphalt, two trays, hula hop. Variable measures

Courtesy: Studio Stefania Miscetti and the artist

Oltremare / Overseas, 2006

Photography. Lambda print on aluminum
125 x 187 cm

Courtesy: Federico Luger (FL GALLERY) and the artist

In teca / In box, 2011

Wood, hooks, onion skin, acrylic
58 x 58 x 6 cm

Courtesy: Federico Luger (FL GALLERY) and the artist

L'infinito di Leopardi nella Lingua dei segni Italiana /

Leopardi's Infinity in the Language of Italian Signatures, 2018

Video mp4, loop, black and white, mute

Courtesy: the artist

Venti di rivolta o Rivolta dei venti / Winds of Revolt or Revolt of the Winds, 2009

Installation. Fans, galvanized iron pipes, electrical installation, balls made by beetles *Geotrupes stercorarius*

Variable measures

Courtesy: the artist

Sassi, seggiole e sonagli / Stones, Chairs and Bells, 2007-2015

Pebbles, chairs and bells

150 x 150 cm approx.

Courtesy: Federico Luger (FL GALLERY) and the artist

Perla a Piombo / Plumb with Pearl, 2003

Plummet, cotton thread, white pearl
4 x 9 cm

Courtesy: Federico Luger (FL GALLERY) and the artist

Occhi / Eyes, 2016

Photography. Lambda print on aluminum
Variable measures

Courtesy: Marval Collection, Berlin; Private Collection, Milan, Italy; Bordoli Collection, Como, Italy; Private collection, Switzerland; Private collection, Caracas, Venezuela.

Untitled, 2016

5 bamboo brooms on marble base
Variable measures

Courtesy: Federico Luger (FL GALLERY) and the artist

Due cipolle / Two Onions, 2019

Wooden frame, onion skin
65 x 65 x 10,5 cm

Courtesy: Edoardo Conti

Tre cipolle rosse / Three Red Onions, 2019

Wooden frame, onion skin
64 x 64 x 11 cm

Courtesy: Federico Luger (FL GALLERY) and the artist

Una cipolla / One Onion, 2019

Wooden frame, onion skin
64 x 64 x 11 cm

Courtesy: Wizard Gallery, London

Castelli di Sabbia / Sand Castles, 2000

Sand, old shoes, incense
Variable measures

Courtesy: the artist



Bruna Esposito was born in 1960 in Rome, where she lives today. She graduated in 1979 at the Liceum of Fine Arts in Rome. She lived in New York, awarded by ISP Whitney Museum and by P.S.1. She lived in West Berlin, supported twice by I.B.A. Berlin. Some remarkable exhibitions are: Rome Quadriennale (1996-2008), Documenta X Kassel, Germany (1997), Venice Biennial (1999-2005), Istanbul Biennial, Turkey (2003), Gwanju Biennial, South Korea (2004), New Orleans Biennial, USA (2008), Cuenca Biennial, Ecuador (2016), Cuba Biennial (2019). She won the Venice Biennial's Golden Lion prize in 1999.

Oltremare / Overseas, 2006

Photography. Lambda print on aluminum

Courtesy: Federico Luger (FL GALLERY) and the artist

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