

Press release

Muratcentoventidue Artecontemporanea

Flags

Lydia Dambassina, Lello Gelao, Gabriela Golder, Francesca Loprieno, Johanna Reich

Muratcentoventidue Artecontemporanea is pleased to present "*Flags*", a group exhibition featuring works by Lydia Dambassina, Lello Gelao, Gabriela Golder, Francesca Loprieno, Johanna Reich.

The flag as a leitmotif of an entire exhibition, an object to be investigated, a symbol that contains dreams, fears, illusions, hopes.

Fertile ground for many artists, the flag has been and still is a strong creative pretext to express one's ideas and make a whole series of considerations and reflections on what it represents or should represent, a symbol of individual and personal freedom, but also emblem of undeniable and dramatically current truths.

There are numerous examples of contemporary artists that can be cited among these, the large painting *Festa Cinese* (1968) by Mario Schifano, with the red flags invading the entire field of vision, flooding the entire space surrounding the painting.

It was 1971 when Alighiero Boetti, one of the most active and eclectic artists of the second half of the twentieth century and, in particular, one of the greatest exponents of *Arte Povera*, created the work *Mappa* which consisted of a classic image of the political world map in which the grafting flags of specific nations in the geographical map suggested, however, that there are no barriers, but diversities that can be transformed into cultural richness.

More recently, for Expo 2019 Michelangelo Pistoletto created "*The Flag of the World 1+1=3*", a symbol of union and peace between peoples, 196 painted canvases depicting the flags of the countries of the world, arranged according to the shape of the symbol of *The Third Paradise*.

Perhaps, among all the flags, it is the American one that has stimulated such a vast, varied and highly problematic if not absolutely critical production.

Geographical and encyclopedic symbol, color of distant homelands, emblem of social struggles. What is a flag today? In times of new nationalisms we often wonder this.

What meaning does this symbol take on in the works on display and from what needs its use derive?

The invited artists deal with this theme with different languages such as photography, video and painting.

Lydia Dambassina, born in Thessaloniki, lives and works in Paris, Athens and Kea island. She studied at the School of Fine Arts of Grenoble and Psychopathology and Pedagogy at the Universities Paris V and Grenoble. She has worked as researcher in psychiatric epidemiology and as art director in film production.

Since 1976, Lydia Dambassina has been working in various mediums such as painting, photography, installations and video projections with the obsessive concern about climate change.

Her work talks about nature, love, dichotomy in self-perception, time, religion, the condition of women, politics, immigration and the ethical and economic crisis we are experiencing in recent years. Her interdisciplinary approach, the quality and selection of themes, as well as the combination of text and image are the main distinguishing characteristics of her work. Barbara Polla writes: *"Few artists have been as involved for so many years in combining humanist values, the preservation of nature and the fight against economical inequalities in both art and life"*.

The photography *Alle Wege sind verschlossen* is part of a project, *Party's over – Starts over* started in 2008 and completed in 2011, which touches on various aspects of the economic, cultural and moral crisis that afflicts Greece and beyond. Lydia Dambassina attempts to express the position of the modern artist with respect to the problems of her time.

Lydia adheres to Alex Preston's thinking, *"We all believed in the dream: that we were part of an eternal bloom, that we were living the dream. The economic crisis is the main story of the first decade of the 21st century"*.

Lello Gelao lives and works in Bari where he attended the Academy of Fine Arts. He combines his activity as an artist with that of a teacher. Since 1980 he has worked in the field of painting.

For some years, Lello Gelao's research has focused on the subject of portraiture through an essential and intense figuration, thanks also to his attention to mass media and photography.

His figures are clear, luminous images, with extremely intense planes of color, rendered in a particular two-dimensional perspective and deprived of any sentimental connotation, but which manage to communicate a profound resonance psychological.

In his paintings the artist usually inserts a single character, as in the work proposed in this exhibition, alone and physically and psychologically detached, managing to capture a particular moment, almost the precise second in which time stands still and everything appears immobile, silent. His work is characterized by empty atmospheres and rarefied environments and speaks of solitude, melancholy and suspended time.

In *Boy with a Flag*, an oil painting on canvas, depicts a little boy managing to capture an inner dimension full of inscrutable mystery. The small red flag is not a symbol of identity here but a simple game for children.

The Argentine visual artist **Gabriela Golder** is curator and professor of Experimental Video and New Media in Argentina and abroad, she is the co-director of both the Bienal de la Imagen en Movimiento (BIM) and CONTINENTE, Research Center in Audiovisual Arts, at the Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, in Argentina. She also serves as curator of the Experimental Video and Film Program of the Modern Art Museum in Buenos Aires.

Using the formats of film, video and installations, her works primarily raise issues of memory, identity and the world of labour.

"**Rebeliones**" is part of a series of video installations entitled "Todo se enciende" in which the artist proposes a contemporary reinterpretation of emblematic lithographs by renowned engraver Guillermo Facio Hebequer.

Exhibited at the National Museum of Fine Arts of Chile, it is a project that takes as reference the series of prints *Tu historia, compañero* (1933) (1933), by *Hebequer*. For her creation the artist worked with the participation of a group of workers from the recovered factories through the management of the workers themselves and of community theater actors who give substance to a series of scenes that represent the oppression and weight of the class proletarian.

In *Rebeliones*, Golder recreates *La Internacional*, a print from 1935, in which Hebequer through a revolutionary aesthetic claims the emancipation of workers by explicitly alluding to the famous workers' anthem.

Francesca Loprieno is an Italian artist who lives and works in Paris. She graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in "Phenomenology of Contemporary Art" (Rome) and "Photography and Video" from the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts décoratifs (Paris). She experiments with different languages, favoring photography, video and installation, and she makes crossing and travel, substantiated by her personal and collective memory, her current field of research. Her work is a personal attempt to establish a dialogue between the perception of the landscape and her intimate crossing of it with the intention of collecting sensitive and imperceptible traces, fragments of an intimate diary in which identity and otherness interpenetrate to generate a broader and more collective story.

She proposes a photographic diptych entitled "*Limes*", a term of Latin origin and borrowed from military vocabulary which indicates the border, the territorial delimitation, the frontier between the known and the unknown.

In an aseptic sky, a white flag is held up by female hands praising the search for peace and surrender. The image with the flag is strengthened by that of an anonymous terrain accompanied by the phrase "*Tu rencontreras tes limites mais tu n'auras pas de frontières*" (you will meet your limits, but you will have no borders) which invites you to overcome every gaze and travel physically and emotionally the places to cross them freely. The images are an invitation to the communion of differences and to the reconquest of humanity as a unifying element.

Johanna Reich, born in Minden, Germany, holds a degree in Fine Arts from the Academy of Fine Arts in Muenster and Hamburg (Kunstakademie Münster, HfbK Hamburg) and postgraduate studies at the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne, where she lives and works today. In 2006 she received the Nam June Paik Award and her works have been exhibited around the world.

In times of omnipresence of the moving image, the artist has decided to experiment with different media (video, photography, installation painting, performance, sculpture and holographic projections) to explore the relationship between human beings and the virtual world and investigate the limits of digital technology.

"We have long been living in two worlds; the virtual world can be seen as the simulacrum of the physical world. However, the two worlds have overlapped and influenced one another to such an extent that the current question appears to be whether the real world has not become a simulacrum of the simulacrum ..."

Identity or picture? Simulation, hyperreality, illusion or deception? In what kind of a world do we live and what pictures do we see?"

She proposes a video performance entitled "*Flags*". Starting point for the video was the FIFA World Cup in 2006. For the first time in many years since the World War II german flags could be seen everywhere in Germany. Facing the German national colors in every corner was triggering a range of complex sensations. The video *Flags* belongs to a series of "video paintings" which examine the interplay between the meaning of national colours and identification in times of globalisation: The artist paints her environment in the colours she is dressed. Dressed in three colours, the first flag is created. The process will always retain a color of the existing painting, from which the following occurs: A red stripe of the Spanish flag becomes the red stripe of the Polish flag. During the painting process the combination of colours and perspectiv (of the camera) change their meanings: they become different national national identities.

Venue

Muratcentoventidue-Artecontemporanea

Via G. Murat 122 / b - Bari

Inauguration

Saturday April 13, 2024, 7.00 pm

Period

April 13 - May 30 , 2024

Opening hours

Monday, Tuesday and Saturday by appointment only

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 6 pm to 8 pm

Info

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<http://www.facebook.com/MuratcentoventidueArtecontemporanea>

https://www.instagram.com/muratcentoventidue_bari

CV

Lydia Dambassina was born in Thessaloniki (Greece). At the age of fifteen years she moves to Lyon (France) where she completes the secondary school. She studied at the School of Fine Arts of Grenoble and Psychopathology and Pedagogy at the Universities Paris V and Grenoble. She has worked as researcher in psychiatric epidemiology and as art director in film production. Since 1976, Lydia Dambassina has been working with different mediums such as painting, photography, installations and video projections. Lydia Dambassina is most frequently exhibited in Greece, but also had exhibitions in Italy, United States and

elsewhere. Lydia Dambassina has exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art (Thessaloniki), the Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art (Thessaloniki), the Benaki Museum (Athens), the Hôpitaux Universitaires (Geneva), the Eglise de Saint-Eustache- Nuit Blanche (Paris), the Kunsthalle Athena (Athens), the Center of Contemporary Art (Thessaloniki), the Alex Mylona Museum (Athens) the Athens Festival, the Museum Manege, Saint Petersburg, the Collegium Artisticum, Sarajevo and the Jewish Museum of Greece (Athens).

Other notable shows were at the City of Athens Arts Centre, Athens Biennial in Athens and National Museum of Contemporary Art - EMST in Athens.

Lydia Dambassina's art is in museums collection, at Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art (MOMus) in Thessaloniki, at the National Museum of Contemporary Art - EMST in Athens and the art collection of the Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève.

Lello Gelao was born in Bari where he lives and works. He is graduated at the Academy of fine Arts of Bari. He combines his activity as a teacher with that of an artist. He founded the cultural association Muratcentoventidue Artecontemporanea in 2007.

His work has been shown in Germany, France, India and in Italy at Bologna, Bolzano, Genova, Malo (Vi) , Milano, Verona, Among his latest exhibition : solo exhibition Uomini, Galleria Muratcentoventidue-Artecontemporanea, Bari 2010; solo exhibition Uomini, galleria Peter Tedden, Düsseldorf 2010, solo exhibition Invisible Present, Galleria Muratcentoventidue-Artecontemporanea, Bari 2013; among his latest group exhibition: Kunstart art fair Bolzano,2008; Quadriennale – Düsseldorf, 2010;Verona ArtFair 2011;Contemporaneamente, Galleria Spaziosei, Monopoli (Bari) 2012; Sotto il segno dello Zodiaco, Galleria Spaziosei, Monopoli (Bari) 2015; What we once were, Galleria Muratcentoventidue Bari, 2018;Emschergold-Sammlung Tedden, Galerie Münsterland, Emsdetten, Germany, 2018; Gala- Spazio Murat ,Bari ,2018. His works can be found in public and private collections.

Gabriela Golder (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1971)

Golder works in video, installations, performance and site-specific interventions. Her works fundamentally raise questions related to memory, identity, institutional violence and the world of labour. She is professor at the Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero in Argentina, curator of the Experimental Video and Cinema Program at the Museum of Modern Art in Buenos Aires and the director of BIM (Moving Image Biennale, in Buenos Aires).

She received several awards for her work, among others: Honourable mention *15th Sharjah Biennial* (2023); Best work, National Visual Art Salon, Argentina (2021); Estado da Arte, 21a Bienal de Arte Contemporânea Sesc_Videobrasil (2019); "Sigwart Blum Award", Argentinean Critics Association (2007); ZKM Media Art Award, Germany (2004); Videoformes Award, France (2003) and the Tokyo Video Award (2002).

Her exhibitions include: 15th Sharjah Biennial; Arrancar los ojos, Espacio de Artes y Memoria Fragmentos, Bogotá, Colombia; DreamCity, Tunis; Los ojos desiertos, Fundación Andreani, Buenos Aires, Todo se enciende, Museo del Grabado, Buenos Aires; Escenas de trabajo, Museo de Bellas Artes de Chile; 21a Bienal de Arte Contemporânea Sesc_Videobrasil, Sao Paulo; Jakarta Biennale; Whitechapel Gallery, Gabriela Golder and Wojciech Bakowski, Artist' Film International, London; Gabriela Golder, Dazibao, Montreal; Dissonance, Getty Center, LA, USA.

Francesca Loprieno is an Italian photographer living in Paris. After graduating from the Academy of Fine Arts in "Phenomenology of contemporary art" (Rome) and "Photography and Video" at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts décoratifs (Paris), she carried out numerous experiences in teaching at schools of art and museum institutions. Since 2017 you have collaborated with the Maison du Geste et de l' Image in Paris, a research center for visual images with which you carry out various institutional projects in the field of photographic research and pedagogical transmission.

In 2021, she published her first artist book "Harnes", published in France by Esprit de l'Escalier. This work is part of the private art collections of the Bastianelli Prize, the Book Award 2022 of Arles and the Volumes Award 2022 of Zurich. In 2023 you took part in the Return2Ithaca international artistic residency in Greece. Her project Sulla Dizona di lei is among the winners of the New Post Photography Award (MIA PHOTO FAIR 2023) and among the finalists of the 12th edition of the Francesco Fabbri Award – contemporary photography section.

Among his most important projects, we find: in 2011, Identi-kit, with which he participated in the 54th International Art Exhibition of the "Venice Biennale", 471, with which in 2018 he won the Prize from the

Primoli Foundation of Rome for the development of literary and artistic culture between Italy and France, a creation later acquired by the same foundation. In 2021, at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, she participated in "Detour 2.0 A journey through creative catalysts", curated by the Moleskine Foundation, an organization that then acquired and welcomed her work into its collection. In the same year she Urbild, Red Lab Gallery Lecce, Sibilla, Galerie Hors-Champ, Saint Mathurin sur Loire (France), Future Roots, Red Lab Gallery Milan. In 2020, Cabinet de Merveilles, Maison d'Emma, Saint Mathieu de Treviers (France). In 2019, Sibilla, Galerie L'Aberrante, Montpellier, (France), Identi-Kit, Maison du Geste et de l'Image, Paris (France). In 2018 Limes, Maison du Geste et de l'Image Paris (France). In 2014 his work Insulae was exhibited in the Piramida of Tirana (Albania), at the National Gallery of Cetinje (Montenegro), at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Rijeka (Croatia) and at the Magazzini del Sale (Venice) on the occasion of the Coexistence project for a new adriatic koiné promoted by the Pino Pascali Museum of Polignano a Mare (Italy).

Johanna Reich

Johanna Reich was born in Minden, Westphalia; she lives and works in Cologne, Germany.

She studied at the Münster Art Academy with Guillaume Bijl , Andreas Köpnick and Peter Schumbrutzki , at the Hamburg University of Fine Arts with Gerd Roscher and Wim Wenders , at the Cologne Academy of Media Arts and at the Facultat de Belles Arts in Barcelona.

Her works have already been featured in individual or group exhibitions in Germany and abroad, including at the following institutions: Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography (2007), Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid (2009), Kunsthaus Hamburg (2010), Stella Art Foundation, Moscow (2010) Kunst Werke Berlin (2010), Contemporary Art Museum of Estonia (2010), Cobra Museum Amstelveen (2011), Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto (2011), Videonale 13, Kunstmuseum Bonn (2011), Museum für Konkrete Kunst Ingolstadt (2011), Arp Museum Rolandseck (2012), Kunsthaus Nürnberg (2013), Kunsthalle Münster (2013), Frankfurter Kunstverein (2013), Palais de Tokyo Paris (2014), Kunsthaus Düsseldorf (2014), Skulpturenmuseum Glaskasten Marl (2015), Clemes Sels Museum Neuss (2015), PRISKA PASQUER (2015), Kasseler Kunstverein im Friedericianum, Kassel (2016) , Litfaßsäulen Köln, Cologne (2016), Istanbul Modern (2016), PRISKA PASQUER (2016), Äkkigalleria, Jyväskylä, Finland (2017), Q12 im MuseumsQuartier Wien, Vienna (2017), Gislaved Konsthall, Sweden (2017), satellite project of the SkulpturProjekte Münster sculpture projects, Marl and LWL Münster (2017),The Stolen World , Max Ernst Museum Brühl of the LVR , Brühl (2018), Simulacrum , Galerie Priska Pasquer, Cologne (2018), The Long Now , Museum Goch (2018), Inner Nature , Äkkigalleria, Jyväskylä, Finland (2018),OWL 5 Search for Traces (group exhibition), Marta Herford (2019), All the world's a frame , Kunstverein Morsbroich (2020),Girl meets girl, Vestfossen Art Laboratory, Norway (2022),GLITCH. The Art of Interference , Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2023).

Among other prizes, she has won the Nam June Paik Award (2006), the Japanese Excellence Prize for Media Art (2007), the Funding Award of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia for Media Art (2009), the Konrad von Soest Award (2011) and the "Luise Straus Award" (2017).

Her works are part of international Collections like the Jerry Speyer Collection New York, the Goetz Collection Munich or the Collection of Museum Ludwig Cologne.