

Interview to Lutz & Guggisberg about their solo show at Collezione Maramotti



Lutz & Guggisberg – Neve, vetro e rami / Snow, Glass and Branches
2018, acrilico e olio su c-print / acrylic and oil on c-print , 60 x 90 cm © Lutz & Guggisberg. Ph. Nadine Kägi

Lutz e Guggisberg tell their first solo show in an Italian museum, *Il giardino* ("the garden"), at Collezione Maramotti (Reggio Emilia), exclusively to ArtsLife. The project can be visited until December 30th 2018, it develops in five rooms and shows over thirty works, including installations and photographs. It's organized in conjunction with the 2018 *Fotografia Europea festival*, "Revolutions. Upheavals, Changes, Utopias". The post-apocalyptic mood of the scenes hints at the recent passage of a natural disaster, but could also suggest an all-too-human process of violent destruction.

Let's start with the title: "The garden", the reasons for the choice. How does this subject relate to your artistic research?

We understand this title in its metaphorical meanings. Garden can be all the earth's surface that is influenced by man and his activities in a macro-cultural way, that is agriculture, gardening, but also industries, housing, traffic structures and so on, the whole layer of civilization that is covering so much of the land.

This very much relates to other works that we have been doing in the past, because we are interested in the affinity of//between nature and culture and the connections and passages between the two.

Installations and photographs with pictorial interventions. How do the works dialogue and relate? What kind of materials make up the installations?

The idea of various kinds of recycling is a central aspect in both the paintings and the objects/sculptures. We collected materials in some Reggio Emilia storages and built our sculptures with them, we saw the destructed garden near our studio in Zurich and continued if you want a kind of a gardening work on the photos that we produced of it.



Lutz & Guggisberg
Bolle di gas serra / Greenhouse Gas Bubbles, 2018
acrilico su c-print / acrylic on c-print
80 x 120 cm
© Lutz & Guggisberg
Ph. Nadine Kägi

Interventions on photographs represent an “ultra-photographic” reality. What other reality do they want to represent?

The interventions on the photos are not made by photoshop but by brush and color. We think it is more the photos that represent an objective photographic reality, whereas the painting layers and motifs are areas of phantasy, phantastic impossible attachments, of absurd games and continuations of what was already there, a copy and paste – principle.

Until mid-June, the Fotografia Europea Festival 2018 is held in the city, on the theme: “Revolutions, Rebellion, change, utopias”. In the photographs, the cabins, work tools, tables, chairs, rubber hoses and other objects are overturned by a presumed natural disaster or human intervention. What revolution or change do they evoke (to connect to the theme of the festival)?

They evoke not so much a revolution but an evolutionary continuation of what has been happening for a long time: mankind digging over earth’s surface in a neverending rearrangement of materials and objects that have already been here before.

How can art fit into the man-nature dialectic (natural catastrophe and process of violent destruction by man)?

Art can show that after every apocalypse there is a new beginning.



Lutz & Guggisberg
il giardino
veduta di mostra / exhibition view
Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, aprile / April 2018
Ph. Roberto Marossi

“Will “The Garden” be able to evolve further?

No question about it, there will always be things that grow on...

In June an artist’s book will be published with all the photographs on display and a text by the geographer Matteo Meschiari. What kind of book is it about?

We are still working on it. It will just try to tell the story of this project in an informative way.

How is it articulated and what dialogue is established between your work and the sage of the geographer?

We just read his text and we are very happy with it ! It has a great breath going way back to the ancient world and coming back to science fiction. But we don’t wanna blab too much!

One of your most important works is Bibliothek, a growing library of hundreds of imaginary books. What is it about and what developments has it had and/or could it have?

It is an imaginary library (wooden book dummies with invented titles, authors, blurbs and graphic design mounted on them) that in a way copypastes realbooks, be it literature, art books, non-fiction books, magazines and so on. It is also about recycling, i.e. sitting on a mountain of knowledge, history, contexts and play a game with it.