

GREEN . ART . GALLERY

Theatre of the Absurd

13 September - 28 October 2017

Green Art Gallery is pleased to present a group exhibition that reflects on the relationship between art and architecture, exploring the ways they influence and feed off each other. Infusing symbols that have been traditionally used in architecture, the artists in the exhibition question other formal enquiries and the relationship between man, objects and the space they inhabit. They produce fleeting and ambiguous realities which, momentarily, disturb our conditioned relationship with the objects that surround us. *Theatre of the Absurd* features works by **Farah Atassi**, **Ana Mazzei**, **Nika Neelova**, **Hemali Bhuta** and **Elena Alonso**.

In her grid-like paintings, French-Syrian artist **Farah Atassi** continues to consider space through an exploration of decorative motifs and architectural models. Using "display" objects that overlap and interlock, the artist creates ambiguous spaces with nods to Fernand Léger, Matisse, Malevich, Mondrian, and Charles and Ray Eames. In her new painting *Modern Ballet* (2017) she extends the question of architecture to the body, by building figures out of the structured shapes and straight lines, orchestrated with shapes that refer to the emblematic construction elements of the European avant-gardes, similar to those of the grid.

Men and narratives, in their inseparable relationships, define **Ana Mazzei's** interest. It is from this perspective that her work develops and grows. For the artist, art, architecture and landscapes construct, in themselves, a fiction that connects them, resulting in installations, settings and objects. Some of the works operate on a smaller scale, such as the series of installations arranged on the floor formed by groups of small shapes made of felt, concrete or wood similar to the architectural models of old cities, amphitheatres or monuments. Beyond the formalist exercises, these floor objects invoke unidentified stories that suggest hidden and impenetrable archetypal structures. This dual movement, suggesting and retaining the symbolic value of the objects, is recurrent in her practice.

Working primarily with sculpture and large sculptural installations, **Nika Neelova's** work seem to inhabit a post-human world in which human needs and definitions have long since been forgotten, remaining only as a vestigial memory in the forms of the sculptural subjects. Abstracted and seemingly evolved over countless generations from their ancestors, recognizable everyday objects have moved past the functionality once imposed upon them and become something new and different. For the exhibition, the artist presents a new work from her *Lemniscate* series. Pulled from raw material through the history of its function, the object made from an entire reclaimed bannister records the movements of the body through space when the body is no longer there. It acts as a mediator between the space and the body, a guide for the hand into three-dimensional space. The object meets the hand. The hand meets the object. The resulting work is a poetic interpretation about absence and the memory of touch.

Hemali Bhuta's multi-disciplinary practice is primarily concerned with the notion of an 'in between' or 'transitory' space and the elements that contain or create such spaces. For Bhuta, 'in-between-ness' is a plane where the limitations of dimensionality do not apply and there is a possibility for transcendence. By attempting to translate one medium or form to another, her practice questions the authority that frames an interior for its own purpose. Bhuta adopts materials that seem robust and ageless, but in fact are susceptible to disintegration over time, to reveal how appearances can be deceptive. Her site-specific sculptural works generally lie on the floor like fossils of bygone eras, sometimes embracing their spaces, and other times destabilizing them. Through the tension between the works and the spaces they inhabit, viewers experience a state of 'in-between-ness.'

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Since its inception, **Elena Alonso**'s drawing practice has continuously redefined its own formal limits. The artist cultivates an ambiguous terrain in her iconography, somewhere between geometric abstraction and organic representation with allusions to the body. While using the language of other disciplines such as architecture, design and handicrafts she liberates them from their inherent practical use. This uncertainty of function is in contrast with the power of her meticulous compositions that pay strong attention to problems connected to our relationship with our surrounding. The materials used in the process further accentuate the ambiguity of the composition. Thus the drawings oscillate in a tension between precision and strangeness, the essential and the ornamental, and the abstract meaning of notations and methods used in the representation of architecture.

Artists' Biographies

Farah Atassi (b. 1981, Brussels, Belgium) lives and works in Paris where she completed her studies at the Ecole Nationale supérieure des Beaux Arts in 2005.

Recent solo exhibitions include Ghebaly Gallery, LA, Xippas Gallery, Paris and Geneva; Extra City Kunstal, Antwerp, Belgium; Galerie Michel Rein, Brussels, Belgium; Le Grand Café, Saint Nazaire Art Center, France; and Le Portique, Contemporary Art Center, Le Havre, France. Select institutional exhibitions include Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Strasbourg, France; Biennale of Painting, Roger Raveel Museum, Machelen-Zulte, Belgium; MAC/VAL, Val-de-Marne, France; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Musée Régional d'Art Contemporain Languedoc-Roussillon, Sérignan, France; Musée des Beaux-arts de Libourne, France; Palais d'Iéna, Paris, France; Biennale de Curitiba, Brazil; and Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France. In 2013, Atassi was nominated for the Prix Marcel Duchamp, and in 2012, she was named the winner of the Jean-François Prat Prize in France. Her work has been featured in Artforum, Frieze Magazine, and ArtPress, among other publications. Atassi's first bilingual monograph was published by Les Presses du Réel in 2015.

Ana Mazzei (b.1980, São Paulo) is based in São Paulo, Brazil. She has completed a BFA in Visual Arts at the Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado (FAAP) and a MA in Visual Poetics at UNICAMP.

In 2013 she was selected for the residence at Cité des Arts - Paris and in 2012 was a participant in the Independent Study Program at Escola São Paulo (PIESP) directed by Adriano Pedrosa. Recent solo exhibitions include *Ghost Studies*, Almine Rech Gallery, New York (2017); *Demasque et nu*, Galerie Emmanuel Herve, Paris (2016); and *Se disser que fui Passaro*, Galeria Jaqueline Martins, São Paulo (2014). She participated in the 32nd Sao Paolo Biennial curated by Adriano Pedrosa in 2016.

Elena Alonso (b.1981, Madrid) lives and works in Madrid where she graduated with a degree in Fine Art from the Complutense University of Madrid.

Her work has been featured in solo exhibitions at Espacio Valverde (2016); Museo ABC (2015); Sala de Arte Joven, as part of the programme 9 (2011); at A.C. Mediodía Chica (2010); and at the Cable Factory in Helsinki (*Paredes de piel*, 2007). She has recently been awarded several distinctions and grants including the Contemporary Creation Grant from Matadero Madrid to produce the project *Objeto de duda*. Her work is in several private and public collections including Collection Xavier Guerrand-Hermes, Paris, Collection De la Puente, Lima, Museo de Obra Gráfica Palacio de San Clemente, Cuenca and the Museo Fundación Antonio Pérez, Cuenca.

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Hemali Bhuta (b. 1978) has completed her BFA from the L.S. Raheja School of Art, Mumbai and her MVA from the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University Baroda.

Recent exhibitions include *Measure of a Foot*, Project 88, Mumbai (2016), *Between Structure and Matter: Other Minimal Features*, Aicon Gallery, New York (2016); Singapore Biennale (2016); *Citizens of Time*, Dhaka Art Summit (2014); *Hiwar: Conversations in Amman*, Darat Al Funun, Amman, Jordan (2013); Yorkshire Sculpture Park (2012); Frieze London Sculpture Park (2012); *Lines of Thought*, Parasol Unit, London (2012); 9th Shanghai Biennale (2012), as well as in the traveling Indian Highway Exhibition. She was shortlisted for the Rolex Protegee Award in 2010.

Nika Neelova (b. Moscow, Russia) lives and works in London where she completed her MA at the Slade School of Art in 2011.

Upon graduation she was awarded the Kenneth Armitage Young Sculptor Prize, the Land Security Prize Award and was the winner of the Saatchi New Sensations. She has had several residencies including most recently at the Spike Island in Bristol, UK, Fibra Residency in Colombia and Stiftelsen 3,14 Residency in Bergen, Norway. Recent exhibitions include *Faults Folds Falls* at Vigo Gallery, London (2015); *I lean to you numb as a fossil. Tell me I'm here*, Ron Mandos, Amsterdam (2014); Micro Salon (1957-2017) Iris Clert Legacy, l'inlassable Paris, Antislip, Royal British Society of Sculptors, London (2016); and *Archeologia e Architecture*, Fondazione 107, Turin (2015). Her work is in several collections including the David Roberts Art Foundation Collection, London, Saatchi Gallery Collection, PERMM Museum of Modern Art Collection, Museum Biedermann Collection, Modern Forms Collection and Beth de Woody Collection.

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