

UN VOLO NOTTURNO DIETRO UNA FINESTRA MURATA

13.07.2024 - 18.08.2024

Opening Saturday 13 June 2024 | 16.00 - 20.00

GALLERIA CONTINUA is pleased to host in the Arco dei Becci space in San Gimignano a solo exhibition by Argentine artist Leandro Erlich entitled "*Un volo notturno dietro una finestra murata*" (A Night Flight Behind a Walled Window). In the critical text on the exhibition Nicolas Ballario writes: "It makes me think that Leandro Erlich has no intention of giving up the tension of flight, but at the same time wants to strip away the violence from this possibility and thus achieves the oxymoron of bringing the sky back to the realm of the earth. It is a magic that only art can accomplish, and Erlich invites us to renounce any instance of certainty."

A child prodigy of contemporary art, Erlich exhibited for the first time at the age of eighteen at the Centro Cultural Recoleta in Buenos Aires. In 1998, after graduating in philosophy, he participated in an artist residency at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Texas, where he conceived two of his most famous works: 'Swimming Pool' and 'Living Room'. His international recognition came in 2001 when he took part in the 49th Venice Biennale representing Argentina. Since then, solo exhibitions have followed around the world, including the major retrospective at the Palazzo Reale in Milan in 2023.

Erlich moves with extreme agility between different mediums, not only producing installations, but also sculptures, videos, and even paintings. "I like to think without boundaries," he states. "Each medium should remain, precisely, a medium, not an objective. Anything that allows me to best express the nature of an idea or that facilitates the

encounter with the public is the right tool to create the work. I think this is the reason for the multidisciplinary nature of my work."

The visual, aesthetic, and participatory devices created by Leandro Erlich always seem to place truth and reality at the extreme limit of their own ambiguous paradox but, through their dynamic and intimate formal and structural eclecticism, they find a meaning in their strongest resource: activating those new and unexpected processes connected to a different observation of habitual things or situations. This perspective refers to places, stories, memories, aspirations, desires, alternating them in a critically comprehensive rethinking of appearance. The stated intention is to allow the observer to move from contemplation to participation in a continuous interpretation of meaning.

Erlich uses certain recurring elements to construct his works. In this exhibition: a house window, the portholes of an airplane, as well as small and intangible clouds trapped in glass cases. Made by superimposing a series of glass panes, on each a digital ceramic ink print is applied, 'The Clouds' are among the artist's most poetic and iconic works. "Those clouds in cases suggest to us that "for a while" might be better than "forever": clouds are indeed the opposite of human society, because unlike us, they do not seek stability, and as soon as they realize they have become recognizable, they change appearance, divide, move to become frames and boundaries. Erlich therefore shuns the idea of performance at any cost and puts under glass a symbol of contradiction and does so in an illogical

and irrational manner, not giving answers but rather posing questions and instilling doubts, far from any form of certainty and authoritarianism (...)" says Nicolas Ballario.

"Night Flight' captures the view of a night landscape from the porthole of an airplane in flight. "This is an aerial exhibition by Erlich," says Ballario. "We see it from a window from which a nighttime landscape can be glimpsed. And the more I hear about Erlich as an artist of illusions, the more I am convinced that his are realities, individual and everyday. Of course, there is a contrast, perhaps even a conflict because we are convinced we are flying with our feet firmly planted on the ground, but the truth is that finally those images seen from the window are not simply an aerial tract, but the living representation of the space we find ourselves sharing with others, they are the heritage of all the people who at the moment of their visit are in the gallery, or outside in the alleys of San Gimignano and the world."

Leandro Erlich plays with the perception of things; acting on the reversal of our knowledge he teaches us to look beyond imposed perimeters as in the case of "Blind Window," a walled window suspended in mid-air. Ballario's text reads, "(...) closes a window, but for the first time a series of stacked bricks does not build a wall, rather it tears it down. It dismantles boundaries and widens our gaze, succeeding in the dreamlike feat of an architecture that instead of protecting exposes. It is a new conception of the world, indeed a new world reminiscent of Calvino's The Baron in the Trees, the adolescent who at the age of twelve climbs a tree determined never to come down again, and in that escape tells the world of a new possible civilization. Without superstructures, where the desire to prevaricate, to be protagonists and to perform at any cost is replaced by the desire to fly."

About the artist:

Leandro Erlich was born in Argentina in 1973. He lives and works between Paris, Buenos Aires and Montevideo. In the last two decades, his work has been exhibited internationally and is in the permanent collections of prestigious museums and private collectors, including: Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Tate Modern, London; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; 21st Century Museum of Art Kanazawa, Japan; MACRO, Rome; Jerusalem Museum and many other institutions as relevant to his career.

Erlich has created several striking public works, such as La Democracia del Símbolo at the Obelisco and MALBA Museum in Buenos

Aires, Maison Fond for the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris, Bâtiment at Nuit Blanche Paris, Ball Game for the Summer Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, Port of Reflections exhibited at the MMCA in Seoul, and Palimpsest at the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial in Japan. Currently, his monumental work La Carte will be a permanent part of the city of Bordeaux, France.

During the past years, Leandro Erlich has participated in major exhibitions in places such as CAFAM in Beijing, the MALBA in Buenos Aires, CCBB in several cities in Brazil, PAMM in Miami, Centre Pompidou Metz in Paris, reaching several times the record of visitors.

As a conceptual artist, his work explores the perceptual bases of reality and our capacity to interrogate these same foundations through a visual framework. The architecture of the everyday is a recurring theme in Erlich's art, aimed at creating a dialogue between what we believe and what we see, just as he seeks to close the distance between the museum or gallery space and daily experience.

About the gallery:

Founded in 1990 in San Gimignano, Italy, GALLERIA CONTINUA has expanded its locations to Beijing, Les Moulins, Havana, São Paulo, Rome, Paris and Dubai. GALLERIA CONTINUA represents a desire for continuity between times and a desire to write a current history. Thanks to its investment in forgotten and unconventional sites, the gallery has always chosen unexpected locations, developing a strong identity and an original positioning in over thirty years of activity. The home of Galleria Continua, an ex-cinema, has hosted many prolific exhibitions and installations over the last 34 years. It is a unique and exciting space for artists and the gallery to have to consider when planning and executing exhibitions.

GALLERIA CONTINUA / San Gimignano

Via del Castello 11, 53037 San Gimignano (SI)
+39 0577 943134 | sangimignano@galleriacontinua.com
www.galleriacontinua.com
Monday-Sunday, 10am-1pm | 2pm-7pm

For further information about the exhibition and photographic material:
Silvia Pichini, Communications Manager
press@galleriacontinua.com
cell. +39 347 45 36 136