

MONADES

14.09.2024 – 12.01.2025

Opening Saturday 14 September 2024 | 18.00 – 24.00

GALLERIA CONTINUA is delighted to present Barbana Bojadzi in its San Gimignano space. Born in 1996, Bojadzi graduated from *Beaux-Arts de Paris* in 2021 – the same year she was awarded the Khalil de Chazournes Prize – before moving back to Provins where she currently lives and works. In 2023, she distinguished herself further by winning the Sisley *Beaux-Arts de Paris* Prize for Young Creation. *Monades* marks her debut solo exhibition in Italy, offering a glimpse into a year of profound artistic evolution through a series of recent paintings, most of which were created specifically for this exhibition.

Her paintings arise from a skillful accumulation of layers of color applied on panels typically used for construction and renovation. She was introduced to this material as a child by observing her father work, which sparked her desire to experiment with it while subverting the traditional approach of painting on wooden panels. Both durable and versatile, these panels provide Barbana Bojadzi with the creative freedom to repurpose her work indefinitely by reclaiming additional construction scraps or reworking her previous pieces, creating abstract palimpsests and fostering a continuous process of evolution that sits at the core of her practice. The artist envisions painting as an endless quest for depth and an attunement of energies which, together, inject life into a subject in a given space-time. The title of the exhibition refers to the philosophical concept of Monad which, in its Pythagorean sense, represents the concept of *the One*, the origin of all things. A Monad is the most basic and indivisible unit of existence, and at the same time encapsulates

the entire universe within itself. It is the source from which all numbers, forms, and entities emerge, symbolizing unity, wholeness, and the principle of oneness in the cosmos. Barbana Bojadzi's work investigates the condition that exists in the transition between nothingness and this basic yet all-encompassing matter, operating in the passage from zero to one.

This exhibition reports on a pivotal moment of evolution in the artist's practice. Gradually distancing herself from the minerality and search for extreme textures that characterized her early works, Bojadzi started to experiment with gradation and nuances, tending towards what could be labeled as an organic abstraction. From her years of research into the essence of materials and colors, which she methodically catalogs with scientific rigor, the artist has created a collection of textures that she arranges, merges, or contrasts in search of natural harmony. She approaches these new compositions as open spaces where freedom of gesture coupled with a visceral knowledge of materials generate vivid flows of energy – sometimes complementary, sometimes antagonistic – enabling the viewer to instinctively perceive the essence of the studied subject. In *Soleil II (Phase II)*, the artist breathes tactility into sunlight, rendering it almost palpable and turning light into texture. Similarly, *Adam's fall (phase II)* invites us to experience the consistency of flesh as a tangible material, devoid of any symbolism and yet carrying a transcendent truth about mortality and human nature. Refusing the easy temptation of a linear before-and-after narrative, *Monades* rather highlights the subtle yet critical

evolution at play in the young painter's practice by presenting works illustrating the successive steps of this ongoing transition, celebrating art-making as an eternally shape-shifting production of meaning.

Barbana Bojadzi's practice is one of movement: an uninterrupted and never-ending transformative process where destruction and decay have their place. Working mostly outdoors where her works are subject to the fast-changing weather of Northern France, she experiences this submission to natural forces as an ultimate form of artistic humility and welcomes their unpredictable consequences. Previously exhibited panels are frequently broken into smaller fragments, or conversely stuck together to create larger artworks. Additional layers of colors and textures are added or scraped off from previous works, not to deny their existence but rather to affirm it by molding the unstoppable flow of time. This continuous process of evolution nevertheless casts the century-old question, central to the artist's work, of the relationship between form and identity, reminiscent of the *Ship of Theseus* paradox. First conceptualized by Greek philosopher Plutarch (c. AD 46 - after AD 119) in his *Parallel Lives*, this story gives an account of divine hero Theseus's ship, proudly conserved by Athenians after the mythological semi-god victoriously returned from his quest to slay the Minotaur. In order to preserve this precious heritage, Athenians gradually replaced any rotten plank, torn sail or rusted mechanism in such a way that, after a few centuries, none of the original pieces of the boat remained. In that regard, could it still be considered the ship of Theseus? Is the identity of things intrinsic, or is it concealed in the sum of their components? How is meaning produced and maintained over time in the environment surrounding us? Through her practice, Barbana Bojadzi provides us with the rare opportunity to reflect upon these metaphysical questions via the prism of our own experience as viewers, catching a glimpse of an answer with forms and colors that words alone could not contain.

About the artist:

Born in 1996, Barbana Bojadzi is a French artist who currently lives and works in Provins, France. She graduated from the *École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts* in Paris in 2021, with honors from the jury. At the Beaux-Arts, she was mentored by Dominique Gauthier, Nina Childress, and Dominique Figarella.

In her artistic practice, Barbana Bojadzi is particularly interested in the memory associated with gesture, the idea of imprint, and its relation to Time. Her artworks are characterized by the accumulation of layers, colors, and textures, thus creating

a stratification of meanings and materials, where the image emerges through a mechanism of extraction. Barbana Bojadzi is always seeking new technical processes, highlighting used and reclaimed materials that reflect the humility and simplicity found in her work.

Barbana Bojadzi won several well-established contemporary art prizes in the years following her graduation. She also participated in many group exhibitions, including 'Société Générale Art Collection' at the Société Générale Tower in Puteaux, France, and 'Felicità' at POUH in Aubervilliers, France.

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 atypical locations, developing a strong identity and an original positioning in over thirty years of activity. The home of Galleria Continua, an ex-cinema, it 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

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From Monday to Sunday: 10 AM-1 PM | 2 PM-7 PM;

Starting from 03.11, from Monday to Sunday:

10 AM-1 PM | 2 PM-6 PM

For further information about the exhibition and photographic material:

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