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GIOVANNI OZZOLA INVITES KIKI SMITH

Giovanni Ozzola and Kiki Smith

Opening Saturday 11th September 2021, via del Castello 11, 6pm-8.30pm
Until 6th January 2022, Monday to Sunday, 10am-1pm, 2-7pm, by appointment only
To ensure maximum safety, it is necessary to book your visit to the exhibition using the appropriate form on galleriacontinua.com. At the entrance, it is necessary to show a vaccine pass.

The exhibition conceived by Giovanni Ozzola for the tower's spaces and inaugurated last May opens up a dialogue with Kiki Smith, transforming itself into a two-part story that reveals a subtle yet intense synchronicity between the works of the two artists which consists of: the propensity to embark upon a deep and intimate excursion that probes many directly experienced emotions; the attention and analysis of man's relationship with nature and the universe; the universal aspect of artistic production which is the continuous ancestral relationship with the transience and vulnerability of the human condition with respect to the complexity of life.

Giovanni Ozzola invites Kiki Smith with his most recent works, where the artist's register becomes more intimate and poetic, where Smith reflects on the vastness of the universe, on the female and animal soul, the bearers of an original harmony that is now partly lost, pushing herself to probe the spiritual aspects of the human being, to understand the experiences of the world and the cosmos.

In the entrance hall, Ozzola places the accent on the vaulted ceiling, transforming it into a 'celestial sphere'. *Contando estrellas* - homage to Giotto - is the faithful reproduction of a starry sky, taken during the lockdown period in 2020. "From the roof of the house," declares the artist, "I gazed towards the sky, counting the stars, traveling towards an infinity greater than any thought. Those stars that give our precise position on earth were and are the escape route to an unknown place. They are also a measure of time, days and phases, the direction to follow; a limitless horizon". The entrance acts as a point of union and passage with the adjacent room where Ozzola intervenes with an installation that redefines the space by creating a new horizon using, as on other occasions in the past, the technique of printing on concrete. "The openings that pierce the walls are urban scars, places with such strong symbolism that they become archetypal, they offer us an opening to other worlds. (...) The signs and graffiti are the scars that remind us of our passage. Those structures are our skull and the perspectives our gaze.", the artist explains. Inside the Ozzola room there are two sculptures by Kiki Smith: moon profiles made of bronze that express not only the beauty of natural forms, but also the forces that govern our universe. "The moon is something you can turn to. The Sun is more ferocious; you cannot look him in the eye, while to the moon you can address your prayers, your desires and your sadness, you can pour everything into it. (...) I have always thought that I would like to be like the moon, I would like to be her testimony on earth. (...) Which is a strange thing to think for a person in the contemporary world, but I feel that way, in a certain sense". This is how Kiki Smith describes her relationship with the moon in a recent interview.

The moon is an element that often recurs in the works of Kiki Smith. We also find it represented in *Visitors (stars, multiple crescent moons)*, the tapestry installed in the oldest part of the tower space. Smith's tapestries,

preciously made on Jacquard looms, are chapters of a mythological tale with a surreal background suspended between the Pompeian fresco, symbolist painting and medieval bestiaries. In this work the celestial universe - made up of stars, moon and planets - meets the animal one, giving us the idea of a spiritual harmony that humanity will hopefully be able to rediscover. In the same room Ozzola places a bell. Perhaps fresh from a shipwreck, the artist recovers it, polishes it, and engraves a sentence on it, giving it a new state but not a new function. Here it's a metaphor of self-affirmation, as on ships, indicating the position: "I am here, in the night, in the dark, or simply with my eyes closed, I feel, I occupy this place, I am part of what surrounds me but I am a center, a focal point", declares Giovanni Ozzola.

If the sea in Giovanni Ozzola's photos is like a gaze that embraces the horizon, in *Dormir* by Kiki Smith, space and light converge on a wave on which a female figure rests; as the undisputed protagonist of Smith's work, the woman represents an original harmony that is now partly lost.

Born in Florence in 1982, **Giovanni Ozzola** currently lives and works in the Canary Islands, Spain. He has exhibited his work internationally at numerous public and private institutions, including: MAC - Museo De Arte Contemporaneo De Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil, Gangnam-Gu, Seoul, Korea, Habitat Art Space, Shanghai, China, Ocean Flower Island Museum, Hainan, China in 2021; Villa Croce Museum, Genoa, Italy, OCAT, Shanghai, China, Chao Art Center, Beijing, China, Fosun Foundation Shanghai, China in 2020; Roman Forum and Palatine Hill, Colosseum Archaeological Park, Rome, Italy, Centro Fundación UNICAJA de Almería, Almería, Spain in 2019; Palacio de los Marqueses de Moctezuma, Museo Unicaja Joaquín Peinado, Ronda (Málaga), Spain, Fundación Unicaja, CUC Centro Unicaja de Cultura de Antequera, Spain, Rotary Waregem, Claessens Canvas, Waregem, Belgium, Foundation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France, Palazzo Mazzarino, Palermo, Italy (MANIFESTA 12 collateral event), MAXXI - National Museum of XXI Century Arts in Rome, Italy in 2018; Untitled Association Lynchen, Berlin, Germany, Macro, Rome in 2017; District 6 Museum, Cape Town, South Africa, Sms, Pisa, Italy, Abu Dhabi Art, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in 2016. His works are kept in numerous private and public collections, including the MART in Rovereto, Italy; Chelsea Art Museum in New York, United States; Sharjah Maraya Art Center in Dubai; Mori Museum in Tokyo, Japan; Schunck-Glaspalet in Herleen, the Netherlands; Künstlerhaus Palais Thurn Und Taxis, in Bregenz in Austria; Man Museum of Art, Nuoro, Italy; Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan; Center d'Art Bastille, Grenoble, France; GC, AC, Monfalcone, Italy; Viafarini Docva, Milan, Italy; Pescheria Visual Arts Center, Pesaro, Italy; OCAT - Contemporary Art Terminal, Shanghai, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China; 2139, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia; District Six Museum, Cape Town, South Africa, Star Museum, Shanghai, China. Among the prizes: *Terna Prize* (2008), *The Talent Prize* (2010) and the *Cairo Prize* (2011), *Seat Pagine Gialle*, Regione Toscana (2007).

Kiki Smith was born in Nuremberg in 1954, she lives and works in New York and in the Hudson Valley; she is an associate professor at Columbia University and New York University. After having exhibited in group exhibitions on the fringes of the traditional gallery circuit, she began to participate in events at the most prestigious international institutions including, in 1990, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Center d'art Contemporain in Geneva, the Institute of Contemporary Art in Amsterdam and subsequently, among others, in 1993 the Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst in Vienna. In 2005 the first retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco which also travels to the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston, the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and the Colección Jumex in Mexico City. In 2008, the exhibition *Kiki Smith: Her Home* was presented at the Haus Esters Museum in Krefeld, the Kunsthalle in Nuremberg, the Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona and the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art of the Brooklyn Museum in New York. Among the Biennials we remember the Whitney Biennial of New York (1991, 1993, 2002), the Biennale of Florence (1996-1997; 1998) and that of Venice (1993, 1999, 2005, 2009, 2011, 2017). Kiki Smith's works are included in more than fifty public collections around the world. The artist has received many international awards: Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Sculpture Center (2017), United States Art in Embassies Award (given to her by Hillary Clinton in 2013), Theo Westenberger Women of Excellence Award (2010); Nelson A. Rockefeller Award, Purchase College School of the Arts (2010); Women in the Arts Award, Brooklyn Museum (2009); 50th Edward MacDowell Medal (2009); Medal Award, School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2006); Athena Award for Excellence in Printmaking, Rhode Island School of Design (2006), Skowhegan Medal for Sculpture (2000). In 2006, *TIME* magazine listed her among the *TIME 100*, the most influential people in the world. The artist was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. For the first time in 2019, an Italian public museum, the Uffizi Galleries, dedicated a monographic exhibition to the artist: *What I saw on the road*, at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Palazzo Pitti in Florence, curated by Eike Schmidt and Renata Pontus, the exhibition catalogue in its English version was created with the support of Galleria Continua. Also in 2019, Smith exhibited at the Monnaie de Paris - this is the artist's first solo show in a French public institution - at the Belvedere Museum in Vienna, and at the Deste Foundation Project

For further information about the show and for photographic material:
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