

ENGLISH

GALLERIACONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS HABANA ROMA SAO PAULO PARIS DUBAI

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# ORNAGHI & PRESTINARI

## *Sbilenco*

21/01/2023 – 07/05/2023

**Opening Saturday 21 January 2023, via del Castello 11, 4pm – 9pm.**

Open Monday to Friday, 10am–1pm / 2pm–6pm, Saturday and Sunday, 10am–1pm / 2pm–7pm.

**From 1 March** Monday to Sunday, 10am–1pm / 2pm–7pm.

You are advised to book your visit via the form on [galleriacontinua.com](http://galleriacontinua.com).

Galleria Continua is pleased to present “Sbilenco”, a **solo exhibition by Ornaghi & Prestinari**. Among the most interesting exponents of the **young generation of Italian artists**, Valentina Ornaghi and Claudio Prestinari have consolidated their position internationally in recent years thanks to a series of exhibitions in public spaces and foreign museums.

**Working as a couple** means they can create work within a process of continuous dialogue and sharing. In their works they **elaborate and integrate** formal influences and references taken from the **world of design, architecture and art history, directly confronting materials** and their potential, fusing together pictorial and plastic figuration, reflections on conceptual art and **experiences from their personal life**. Their research focuses on the various facets of “material culture”, understood as the relationship between **man and objects**, and on how this relationship is linked to the **history of materials, design, artisanal and industrial production techniques** and the **consequences related to consumption**.

The **project conceived for San Gimignano** revolves around the **concept of sbilenco** (lopsided) as an ironic irregularity in daily life, a defect that sabotages normality, opening it up to potential **surreal situations**. Ornaghi & Prestinari have set up the gallery spaces with **installations and sculptures that undermine the certainties of everyday environments, unraveling a dysfunctional story, where complexity coexists with ambiguity**.

For the artist couple *sbilenco* (lopsided) means “ridiculously leaning to one side, crooked, defective but also vaguely disturbing”. This irregularity is translated into the works of the stalls space, **transforming the theater into a parody of ordered or “normal” life**. “Sbilenco” is the crookedly framed painting that gives the title to the exhibition, following a geometric pattern that is unbalanced in imperfection. This concept is reflected in other **works that present shapes of distorted proportions** (such as a wheel that loses its center therefore becoming oval), **thus thrown into the dimension of uncertainty**.

“Bedroom” is an unusual bed, inspired by

**Italo Calvino's story *Avventura di due sposi* (in *Gli amori difficili*)**, in which a couple are unable to meet because their respective work shifts do not coincide. In the artwork, one spouse is together with the other but at the same time is hindered in the intimate relationship, they can only partially reach each other as in Calvino's stories. Distance and proximity therefore coexist in the common space.

The concept of *sbilenco* (lopsided) can also be applied to the instability of the series of small sculptures resting on a precariously balanced structure between the stage and the stalls, putting them at risk of falling and meaning they are often in dim light. These **everyday objects** represent an exhibition of personal tools or *mingei* objects, a Japanese movement that celebrated the beauty to be found in humble, everyday objects. **The objects in the exhibition are handcrafted purely for the joy of manipulating materials with the aim of finding the poetry in them.** They are also made to highlight the contrast between the uniqueness of handmade work and the global uniformity of mass production, a transversal concept that is very important to Ornaghi & Prestinari.

The exhibition is completed by a series of **paintings inspired by the theme of rotation as a generative act:** "Pensiero Ellittico", "Scarabocchio", "Sfiorare" or "Svitato" have the common denominator of being polycentric. The works propose the exit from one's own centre to meet the Other, in a continuous dialogue of sharing that is in line with the poetics and preoccupations of the artists.

**Valentina Ornaghi** and **Claudio Prestinari** were born respectively in 1986 and 1984 in Milan, where they live and work. An artistic duo since 2009, one graduated in Industrial Design and the other in Architecture at the Milan Polytechnic before continuing their studies at the IUAV University of Venice. In 2011 they were selected for the workshop with Massimo Bartolini at the Spinola Banna Foundation for Art and in 2012 they received

the Veneto Region Award from the Bevilacqua la Masa Foundation. In 2013 they participated in VIR Viafarini-in-residence in Milan. In 2014 they held their first personal exhibition, "Familiare", at the Galleria Continua in San Gimignano. In 2016 they presented their work at the New York University – Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò inaugurating the cycle of exhibitions dedicated to contemporary Italian art promoted by Magazzino Italian Art. In 2017 they created the public sculpture Philemon and Baucis for the new ArtLine park in CityLife in Milan and exhibit their personal project Grigio Lieve at Casa Morandi/MAMbo in Bologna. In the same year they won a residency at the Carlo Zauli Museum creating a final exhibition at the International Museum of Ceramics in Faenza. In 2018 Galleria Continua dedicated two more solo exhibitions to them in San Gimignano and at Les Moulins. In the same year they won the Club GAMEC Prize and their work became part of the collection of the GAMEC Museum in Bergamo. In 2021 they opened a solo exhibition, "Toccante", at Galleria Continua at the hotel, The St. Regis Rome, in Rome.

In 2022 one of their works was acquired by the International Museum of Ceramics in Faenza and they participated in the Porcelain Biennial in Jingdezhen in China. In the same year they won the competition organized by the "Percent for Art" program of the city of New York to create a series of public sculptures in 2023 in Bush Terminal, Brooklyn.

Among the numerous group exhibitions we mention those at Palazzo Reale, Milan 2015; Le Centquatre, Paris, 2015; Pietro Canonica Museum in Villa Borghese, Rome; Arte Continua, Havana, 2016; Museum Voorlinden, Wassenaar, 2016; MAAT, Lisbon, 2018; MIDeC International Museum of Ceramic Design, Cerro di Laveno Mombello, 20018, Kasteel van Gaasbeek, Brussels, 2019; Rocca di Angera, Angera 2020; Fondation d'Entreprise Martell, Cognac, 2020; Ceramic Art Avenue Art Museum, Jingdezhen, 2022; Fondation Villa Datris, Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, 2022; GAMEC, Bergamo, 2022.

**For more information on the exhibition and photographic material:**  
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