



GALLERIACONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS

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JOSÉ YAQUE

Scavare

Opening: Saturday 21 February 2015, Arco dei Becci 1, 6pm–midnight
Until 11.04.2015, Monday–Saturday, 10am–1pm, 2–7pm

Galleria Continua is pleased to present the Cuban artist José Yaque, who is showing in the gallery's exhibition spaces for the first time. Having graduated in plastic arts from the Higher Institute of Art in Havana in 2011, Yaque represents the youngest generation of Cuban artists. The show he has conceived for San Gimignano, entitled ***Scavare (Digging)***, is the artist's first in Italy. In it he engages with the peculiarity of the gallery spaces, realizing two site-specific works and presenting a series of new paintings

The intimate tie binding art and life together for Yaque enables him to make continual links between art, the individual and nature. His work narrates a vision: that of the encounter between humans and the universe.

The paintings on display in the Arco dei Becci space are like large windows looking onto a landscape – highly material, vibrant, molten rock that attaches itself to the

canvas and acquires new form. The force and sensuality of the pictorial technique employed by Yaque to realize his paintings might be likened to action painting; but in actual fact the artist enters into a new dialectical form with the empty canvas, implementing a kind of performative action that is not manifest as part of the work but which certainly determines the result. Yaque uses just his hands to mix the paints and apply them to the canvas. He digs to reach the source, to find the source of life by achieving a sensorial transposition that is conveyed onto his canvases with a methodical, almost ritual process. The colours blend together, creating discontinuous lines and forming a magma that is transformed once again when the artist wraps the paintings in a plastic film. When the drying process is complete, he removes the protective layer. The result is an eroded painting. The plastic has the same effect on the canvas as wind and water on the earth's surface.

Speaking about the title of the exhibition, *Digging*, Yaque says: "I have had this title in mind for a long time. *Digging*, in the sense of bringing out what is hidden and concealed, is an expression that defines my creative process at present or the things that interest me about this proc-

ess." In the gallery's garden the artist has produced an installation that dialogues in ideal terms with the other site-specific work realized inside the cinema-theatre, in the tower space. The poetic and symbolic element that effects the passage between inside and outside is the window. *"I think the installation of an open window on the ground represents the need to bring something out of a hidden place. And indeed I see all the other works I have chosen to present in the exhibition from this perspective. Also from a broader point of view, my artistic practice is an attempt to respond to a call, which always lies at the heart of my work. For example, the invitation I have received now from Galleria Continua is like an appeal, a call that arrives from what I do not know. The gallery is like an open window that permits me to enter into contact with the earth but also to abandon what is hidden in order to come out."*

José Yaque was born in Manzanillo, Cuba, in 1985. He lives and works in Havana, where he showed in many group and solo shows between 2004 and 2009. In 2010 he contributed to the first Contemporary Art Biennale of Portugal, and showed at the Wasps Artists' Studio in Glasgow, Scotland. The following year he took part in a group show in Madrid, while in 2012 he returned to Glasgow for the International Festival of Visual Art. In the same year he won a residency in Warsaw; while in Poland Yaque showed in the Zacheta Project Room of the National Gallery of Art in Warsaw in the group show *Fragmentos*, and held, in the same gallery, his first solo show outside of Cuba. In this exhibition, entitled *Wisla*, he exhibited a series of large-format drawings and a video focusing on the river Wisla, which flows through Warsaw. In 2013 he took part in the group show *Senderos de Bosque* at Emerson College in Forest Row, England. This experience, together with his work in Warsaw, gave rise to the cycle of drawings entitled *Millennium Bridge*.

For further information about the exhibition and for photographs:
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