

GALLERIA CONTINUA

SAN GIMIGNANO BEIJING LES MOULINS

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ORNAGHI & PRESTINARI

Familiare

Opening: Saturday 1 March 2014, via Arco dei Becci 1, 6pm–12 midnight
Until 17 May 2014, Monday–Saturday, 10am–1pm, 2–7pm

Galleria Continua is pleased to host, in its Arco dei Becci exhibition space in San Gimignano, a project entitled *Familiare*, a solo exhibition by the Italian artistic duo Ornaghi & Prestinari.

Valentina Ornaghi and **Claudio Prestinari** began to work together in 2009, immediately displaying, in their output, a marked attention for materials and their potential. Blending together pictorial and plastic figuration, reflections on conceptual art and personal life experiences, Ornaghi & Prestinari invite viewers into an intimate and delicate universe.

Conceived for Galleria Continua, the project *Familiare (Familiar)* comprises four previously unshown works that dialogue with each other, coherently representing the artists' aesthetic and formal analysis through immersion in their artistic and individual imagination.

As often happens in their practice, in *Familiare* there is a dualism between thought and action, concept and manual activity; the duo's strands of inquiry influence each other, coming together and clashing, but with the desire to stick together in the encounter, an essential and fundamental aspect of working as a couple.

The works in the show testify to an alchemic process of patient testing and transformation of objects from their original state. The artists work with materials that for them are domestic and everyday: wool, wood, steel, silver and copper. They use them to characterize the exhibition space, setting it up, with an almost surgical attention, as an ideal laboratory, in which only the results of their patient labour remain visible. The works accentuate precisely this latter aspect: they refine objects which by their nature reflect on the very idea of labour. And so *Abito (Dress)*, knitted and embroidered, is the personal version of the traditional blue work overalls as elaborated by the artists, who transform the rough, resistant fabric of the original into a delicate, soft and comfortable wrapping.

A reflection on work permeates the whole exhibition, the space of which is also dotted with specific references to the practical action of building: *Appunti (Notes)*. Rounding off the show is a

work as symbolic as it is ironic: *A fior di conio (Uncirculated coin)*. Dwelling on the economic and social value of money, especially in the ambit of contemporary art, Ornaghi & Prestinari silently engage in an action of tampering; this, in fact, might not be discovered if the visitor were not to take the time to turn over the coin, uncovering the manipulated side, which is uniquely embellished.

In the exhibition the artistic sensibility of the duo accompanies the viewing public along a personal yet collective course, prompting reflections and raising topical and shared issues on the one hand, and revealing itself delicately and patiently on the other, in an increasingly confidential and familiar manner. Daily exercises, the summation of simple but demanding actions which, from project to execution, require a constant renewal of will and faith.

Valentina Ornaghi (Milan 1986) and Claudio Prestinari (Milan 1984) began their university education at the Polytechnic of Milan, graduating respectively in Industrial Design and Architecture. They then both went on to study at the IUAV in Venice.

In their works Ornaghi & Prestinari engage directly with the potential of materials and techniques, ranging from ancient complex ones like silvering to experiments with new methods. Particularly interested in the duality inherent in every action, the artists maintain a prevalently aesthetic component with elegant, sophisticated tones, evoking in their insights fascinating figurative compositions not without intensity. They have participated in various workshops and residencies, including VIR-ViaFarini in Residence, curated by Simone Frangi, Milan, 2013; Fondazione Spinola-Banna per l'arte, visiting professor Massimo Bartolini, Poirino (TO), 2011. Collective shows include the *96ma collettiva Giovani Artisti*, Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Galleria di San Marco, Venice, 2012; *The Self-Moving Number*, curated by the Sils project, Duende studios, Rotterdam, NL, 2012; *Jeune Création Européenne*, an itinerant biennale of young artists; *Extracurricular Activity*, curated by Daniele Capra, Superfluo, Padua, 2012; *On fire*, curated by Viviana Checchia and Anna Santomauro, neon<campobase, Bologna, 2010; and the 14th BJCEM (Biennial of Young Artists of Europe and the Mediterranean), Museum of Contemporary Art, Skopje, 2009.

For further information about the exhibition and for photographic material:

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