

FRAGMENTS DE VILLE

EN

ALEJANDRO CAMPINS / CARLOS GARAICOA

OSVALDO GONZÁLEZ / ZHANNA KADYROVA / MOATAZ NASR

MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO / HIROSHI SUGIMOTO

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GALLERIA CONTINUA / Paris Matignon is delighted to present *Fragments de ville* (*Fragments of the city*), a group exhibition bringing together major artists whose practices each, in their own way, examine the city as a space of memory, social transformation, and individual projection. The exhibition explores the intimate relationship these artists maintain with urbanity, in which the city appears both as a reflection of social mutations and conflicts, and as an object of silent contemplation. Far from offering a unified vision, *Fragments de ville* proposes a plural reading of the city as a dynamic place, shaped by movement and change.

The creative environments specific to each artist shape this collective reflection. Cuba, with its unique political and architectural history, deeply influences the works of Alejandro Campins and Osvaldo González. Ukraine, marked by Russian imperialist aggression and the devastation of war, lies at the heart of Zhanna Kadyrova's inquiries. Moataz Nasr, originally from Egypt, explores pan-Arab cultural identity and its relationship to the complex history of North Africa. Interior spaces, such as theaters, cinemas, and historic buildings, form the primary terrain of Hiroshi Sugimoto's global exploration. Carlos Garaicoa, for his part, questions urban architecture as a reflection of the fragility of social and political systems. Finally, Michelangelo Pistoletto, through his *mirror paintings*, sometimes intact, sometimes shattered, introduces the spatio-temporal dimension of the present into the artwork, making the viewer a central actor in the artistic experience.

Originally from Cuba, **Alejandro Campins** draws inspiration from the places he moves through; while remaining deeply marked by his native

island, whose history, architecture, and landscapes continue to nourish his pictorial and photographic practice. His small-format paintings depict deserted architectures, devoid of any human presence, lending the scenes an atmosphere that is both enigmatic and dreamlike.

In the *Altars* series, the artist explores Cuban monuments that have become transformed spaces, whose functions have been altered in the present, stripping these architectures of their original meaning. The *Lethargy* series, meanwhile, focuses on the bunker as an architectural element emblematic of troubled historical periods, striking the artist through its timeless nature, oscillating between protective necessity at certain moments and total abandonment at others.

The works of **Osvaldo González**, also originally from Cuba, take shape through meticulously superimposed layers of adhesive tape. Through this industrial material and the subtle use of light, the artist composes imaginary architectures directly inspired by the reality he experiences. His compositions evoke interior landscapes in which architecture becomes the main subject of the work, capturing fleeting moments and transitional states at the boundary between memory and perception.

Zhanna Kadyrova's *Landmarks* series offers an in-depth exploration of originality, imitation, and historicity. In her creations, the artist experiments with the notion of "false originals," inserting mosaics and sculptures made from locally sourced reclaimed materials into historic urban contexts, where they can pass as authentically ancient.

In *Landmarks (Found Mosaic)*, Kadyrova creates tension between genuine material and constructed

artifact, thus questioning the reliability of historical narratives. The work invites viewers to reflect on authenticity, the passage of time, and the ways in which history and objects from the past can be reinterpreted, manipulated, or reinvented, highlighting the infiltration of misleading information into collective consciousness.

The relationship between society and its history also manifests in **Moataz Nasr**'s series of works in which matches become a central tool, including *The Flower*. For this piece, the artist draws on the motif of a Fatimid-era plate exhibited at the Museum of Cairo, itself damaged by a series of terrorist attacks that struck Egypt in the lead-up to the third anniversary of the 2011 Revolution. Through *The Flower*, Nasr explores fire as a force that is both destructive and creative, mirroring the nature of revolution.

A major photographer of the contemporary scene, **Hiroshi Sugimoto** explores places imbued with history and memory through his *Theaters* series, were produced in Italy and retrace certain stages of a famous journey undertaken in the 16th century by four Japanese emissaries, known as the "Four Boys", sent by their country to discover Christendom. The two photographs depict the theater of Villa Mazzacorati in Bologna and the Teatro all'Antica in Sabbioneta. Begun in 1976, the series led Sugimoto to photograph cinemas and theaters around the world. After a pause of nearly fifteen years, he resumed the project in 2013, incorporating the luminous screen into the composition. The screen's light reveals the subtle architectural details veiled by the surrounding darkness.

The works of **Carlos Garaicoa** embody the idea of fragmentation conveyed by contemporary cities. Part of the *Puzzles* series, they are composed of fragmented urban images, some pieces of which appear to escape the composition and fall into the display case of the work, heightening the sense of disintegration. The photographs of buildings in ruins, taken in Havana, New York, or Cape Town, testify both to the disappearance of buildings from collective memory and to the material collapse of the structures they represent. *Puzzles* embodies an extreme tension between permanence and transience.

The division of space also appears conceptually in the works of **Michelangelo Pistoletto**, inviting viewers to rethink their relationship with art. In his mirror paintings, reality is reflected and directly integrated into the work, blurring the boundary between object and subject. The viewer is no longer a simple observer, but an actor in the artistic experience, making observation both active and reciprocal. In this way, Pistoletto transforms contemplation into a living interaction between art and life.

Through these singular and complementary approaches, *Fragments de ville* composes a sensitive cartography of the contemporary city: fragmented, shifting, and inhabited by time, memory, and imagination.

About the Gallery:

GALLERIA CONTINUA is a contemporary art gallery founded in 1990 in San Gimignano by three friends—Mario Cristiani, Lorenzo Fiaschi, and Maurizio Rigillo—today it operates in San Gimignano, Rome, Beijing, Paris, Les Moulins, Havana and São Paulo.

GALLERIA CONTINUA represents a desire to create, through art, a continuity between eras, enhancing the connection between past, present, and future, with a commitment to actively contributing to the writing of the contemporary art scene. Investing in unique, historically infused spaces, often far from conventional ideals, the gallery has developed a strong identity over more than thirty years of activity, embracing themes related to creation and cultural blending. Its various global locations spaces foster encounters and exchanges centered around works of art, presenting a vision of beauty that is pluralistic, joyful, cosmopolitan, and rich in diverse influences.

In 2024, the gallery inaugurates a third French space in the heart of Matignon, the historic epicenter of the art market and a lively neighborhood in western Paris where important international contemporary art galleries, modern art dealers, and iconic fashion, craft, and lifestyle houses come together, attracting visitors from all over the world.

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