

THE CITRUS PROJECT

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TODOLÍ CITRUS FOUNDATION

CURATOR: LUCÍA MUÑOZ IGLESIAS

13.04.2024 - 12.05.2024

Via Arco dei Becci 1, San Gimignano

Opening Saturday 13 April 2024 | 4pm - 8.30pm

Sunday 14 aprile 2024 to 11.30

Talk: Mario Cristiani e Vicente Todolí

GALLERIA CONTINUA is pleased to host in its halls in San Gimignano The Citrus Project. This is a sociocultural project created to support the Todolí Citrus Foundation, located in the small township of Palmera near Valencia, which serves as a farm and research center. The Foundation is a non-profit organization established by the Spanish curator Vicente Todolí focusing mainly on the study, history, dissemination and conservation of citrus fruits. It is home to a specialised library and a laboratory devoted to research and to the production of essential oils.

Over the years, fourteen international artists have worked with Vicente Todolí to produce this solidarity project aimed to raise funds for the citrus foundation. Their contributions are a sign of their gratitude, each of them honouring Todolí's work from their personal point of view. The fourteen pieces exhibited in San Gimignano are collected inside a one-of-a-kind Collection Box. These works, ranging from photographs to engravings to monotypes, are by Mirosław Bałka, Tacita Dean, Nan Goldin, Paul Graham, Carsten Höller, Roni Horn, Cristina Iglesias, Ragnar Kjartansson, Julie Mehretu, Cildo Meireles, Matt Mullican, Antoni Muntadas, Philippe Parreno and Julião Sarmento.

An important figure in the art scene, Vicente Todolí has been the artistic director of IVAM (Valencian Institute of Modern Art), the founding director of Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves (Porto), the director of Tate Modern (London), the president of the advisory committee on visual arts of the Botin Foundation (since 2011), and the artistic director of Pirelli HangarBicocca in

Milan (since 2012). In 2014 he established the foundation that bears his family name, citrus-producers by tradition. The Todolí Citrus Foundation is a luxuriant citrus grove with approximately 500 varieties covering a surface of 60.000 square metres, making it the largest private collection of citrus fruits on the mainland.

The project is intended to restore the territory, its nature, traditions and biodiversity, and stems from the original nurseries belonging to Todolí's father, later expanded by the curator by purchasing over twenty neighbouring plots, many of which had been abandoned. Gradually, the surrounding land was recovered and returned to its original purpose: flourishing.

Drawing upon the idea of the Persian garden - the greenery enclosed within the walls of the country's palaces historically considered the closest thing possible to the Garden of Eden, complete with fountains, ponds and songbirds - this grove is a place of abundance and beauty, a veritable living museum that changes with the seasons and is ceaselessly growing, offering experiences that involve all the senses. 'The concept of time gives rhythm to all the arts. Attempting to understand time was always at the root of culture. When you create a garden like this, you do so for the future, so that other people can enjoy it', says Todolí, who compares these fruits to works of art or beautiful objects of design. 'The citron is my favourite, one of the four species that engendered all the citrus fruits known to us today. It has infinite shapes - spherical, elongated like a pear, or deformed and monstrous like Buddha's

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SAN GIMIGNANO

hand - and its skin can be soft, rough, knobby; but everything is harmonious, aesthetic. In ancient Rome, it was the most expensive fruit'. He recalls that Cosimo de' Medici was the first citrus fruit collector in the sixteenth century: he grew them in pots inside of orangeries. Today, in Florence we can still find very precious three-century-old citrus plants. Like a modern Medici prince, Todolí is creating one of the most unique and bizarre collections, with 60 varieties of lemon, 22 of lime, 15 of orange, 30 of pomelo, 30 of citron, as well as a number of crossbreeds, such as the limquat (a cross of lime and kumquat), the lipo (lemon and grapefruit) and the ku-cle (kumquat and clementine). 'This is where I can bring together my two interests, art and agriculture, creating a "museum" that changes with every day, with every season. We will never need to change the collection, it will update itself', says Todolí.

Nearly all of the artists who took part in the project created a site-specific piece, and five of them produced a unique work for each box. Roni Horn has silk-screen printed phrases about nature, adding texts that are different for each piece. Similarly, Philippe Parreno has modified his texts that take the form of letters inserted inside the project, each highlighting a phrase. Tacita Dean, who has been collecting postcards since a very early age (many of them depicting citrus fruits), has created a different one for each box. In each of his works, Julião Sarmento explores the different shades of green and yellow of the fruits in the Valencian citrus grove. Cristina Iglesias has created silk-screen prints on copper treated with acid, making each one unique. These unique creations are joined by the silk-screen print of a seed by Mirosław Bałka and a photoengraving of a laboratory by Carsten Höller. Nan Goldin has contributed a photograph of a young man eating grapes, Paul Graham a picture of his mother. The Collection Box is completed by works by Ragnar Kjartansson, Julie Mehretu, Cildo Meireles, Matt Mullican and Antoni Muntadas.

This collection of works aims to homage the earth - its poetry and its substance, its romanticism and its solitude - the curiosity of experimentation, the acceptance of never fully understanding, the joy of playing, constant research, repetition and randomness, the feeling of belonging, while honouring those who came before us and the passing of time. The Citrus Project serves as a living reminder of our relationship with nature, inviting us to appreciate and encourage its rhythms.

About the gallery:

Founded in 1990 in San Gimignano, Italy, GALLERIA CONTINUA has expanded its locations to Beijing, Les Moulins, Havana, São Paulo, Rome, Paris, and Dubai. GALLERIA CONTINUA represents a desire for continuity between times and a desire to write a current history. Thanks to its investment in forgotten and unconventional sites, the gallery has always chosen atypical locations, developing a strong identity and an original positioning in over thirty years of activity. The home of Galleria Continua, an ex-cinema, it has hosted many prolific exhibitions and installations over the last 34 years. It is a unique and exciting space for artists and the gallery to have to consider when planning and executing exhibitions.

Galleria Continua / San Gimignano

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