

Ria Lussi

WHO IS AFRAID OF PINK?

September 30 — November 13, 2021

Maja Arte Contemporanea is delighted to announce the opening of Ria Lussi's personal exhibit, "Chi ha paura del Rosa?" — Who is Afraid of Pink? — on Thursday September 30, 2021.

On display is a collection of ironic and playful self-portraits; it was inspired by Daina Maja Titonel's invitation to close a two-year cycle of exhibitions dedicated to female artists. Lussi responds by challenging the current gender disparity through permutations of her "Rose". Completed in acrylic paint on a round-shaped canvas, each portrait attributes an adjective to its "Rose"; in turn, this becomes an interpretive lens colouring the candid and metamorphic figure that emerges. Lussi's sophisticated research into chromatic variations renders each of her roses unique.

The exhibition is completed by a bust of Leonardo da Vinci in Murano Crystal (2016); three Rosaries (2016) in blown glass by *Maestro vetraio* Silvano Signoretto, and the excruciating "face" of Irene (2014), the only empress to have ruled in the fifteen-century history of the Roman Empire.

The reflection that emerges is a shared and striking concern with the gender gap. This is compounded by the gallerist's own research: she used her expertise as a mathematician to develop a comparative statistical analysis of the state of the gender gap in the visual arts.

To cite only some recent data:

- Between 2008 and the first five months of 2019 over \$196,6 billion has been spent on art in auctions. Only 2% of this sum was designated to works produced by female artists (\$4 billion for close to 6000 artists). In the same timeframe, Pablo Picasso's works alone were auctioned for \$4.8 billion, a staggering contrast.
- The record auction sale for the work of a female artist (the painting "Propped" by Jenny Saville) is \$12.4 billion (Sotheby's, October 2018) compared to the \$ 91,1 billion spent for "Rabbit" by Jeff Koons (Christie's, May 2019).

Responding to a pressing desire to take action and make a contribution towards a change, the Gallery's new website will include a section dedicated to the topic. Its name is inspired by this exhibition.

The exhibit is corroborated by a catalogue including critical essays by Umberto Palestini, Gloria Fossi and by a botanical note on roses by Roberto Valenti.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Ria Lussi was born in Milan. She currently lives and works in Rome; she has lived in Palermo, Napoli, Parigi, Urbino, Trieste. She studied visual arts in Paris, lyrical translation in Trieste and visual design in Urbino.

Among Lussi's recent solo show:

- 2020 "Allegoria", Mucciaccia Contemporary Art Gallery, Rome.
- 2018 "Io sono Giordano Bruno", Recidence, MACRO Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome.
- 2017 "Fragile", Mucciaccia Contemporary Art Gallery, Rome.
- 2016 "Mitochondria", curated by Umberto Palestini, Casa natale di Raffaello and Giardino botanico, Urbino (Italy).
- 2015 "Lussi di Penelope", Biblioteca del Daverio, Milan. Critical essay by Philippe Daverio.
- 2015 "Matrix, Mater, Mother", curated by Gianluca Marziani, Palazzo Collicola, Spoleto.
- 2015 "Close Up" - "Primo piano sulla pittura italiana", curated by Gianluca Marziani, Palazzo Collicola, Spoleto.
- 2014 "Imperatori di luce", curated by Gianluca Marziani. Various locations: Genoa, Villa del Principe; Spoleto, Palazzo Collicola; Rome, Galleria Doria Pamphilj; Milan, Villa Necchi Campiglio. Critical essays by Gianluca Marziani and Adriano Berengo.
- 2012 "Guerrieri di Luce", Galleria Blanchaert, Milan. Critical essay by Jean Blanchaert.
- 2012 "Excesses of an estuary", Mel Sembler Gallery, American Embassy, Rome.
- 2010 "Have a dream", Galleria L'Affiche, Milan. Critical essays by Umberto Palestini and Massimiliano Floridi.