



Artissima 26 Edition 2019

Abstract Sex We don't have any clothes, only equipment

Jana, the historic boutique in Torino, hosts the innovative off-site exhibition project of Artissima focussed on the theme of desire, in line with the *fil rouge* of this edition of the fair.

ABSTRACT SEX: WE DON'T HAVE ANY CLOTHES, ONLY EQUIPMENT

Jana, via Maria Vittoria 45/A

30 October 2019, Preview (by invitation), 10.30pm–12am

31 October 2019, 10am–9pm

1 November 2019, 10am–9pm

2 November 2019, 10am–12am

3 November 2019, 10am–6pm

Free admission

After World War II, an industrialist converted the machinery used previously for the production of bombs into instruments for the making of hair dryers for beauty salons. The sophisticated technologies of war were thus transformed into devices for the perfecting of the "body" as a socially and culturally determinate concept. It was the same historical moment in which the word gender began to be used in the political arena, to describe no longer a natural sexual identity, but instead one that was artificially constructed and therefore commodifiable.

In 1971 a group of lesbians armed with sausages attacked Professor Jérôme Lejeune during an anti-abortion lecture. The event marked the birth of the "Commando Saucisson" (Sausage Commando), around which the Front Homosexuel d'Action Révolutionnaire later gravitated. In the protest, sausages became a parody of the traditional instruments of politics at the time: police truncheons and patriarchal penises.

A few years ago, an artist produced the "Asstral Traveler", a butt plug in coprolite, made of fossilized faeces of dinosaurs dating back to 140 million years ago. The use of this item, a technology designed to produce pleasure through anal stimulation, permits the opening of a space-time gateway. Thus, the anus hosting the plug becomes a post-identitarian organ, transpassing not only the distinction between sexual identities, but also the division between human and non-human, organic and inorganic, present and future.

Abstract Sex: We don't have any clothes, only equipment is an innovative off-site exhibition project of Artissima, extending into the city and occupying the spaces of Jana, the fashion boutique on Via Maria Vittoria that has always been a reference point for artists, writers and other cultural figures. The exhibition – conceived by **Ilaria Bonacossa** and curated by **Lucrezia Calabrò Visconti** and **Guido Costa** – focusses on the theme of desire, in line with the *fil rouge* of this edition of the fair. Poised between an action of piracy and an exhibition, the project features photographs, videos, works on canvas and paper, and objects on loan from galleries taking part in Artissima.

Abstract Sex: We don't have any clothes, only equipment suggests unexpected alliances between bodies, bacteria, objects and machinery, and technologies to disarm the traditional representations of desire. Weaving minor historical and contemporary narratives, the show suggests a crosswise perspective between the virtual and the material, in which everything around us can be rethought as equipment, a weapon at the service of the definition of new mythologies.

The exploration of the territories of desire might involve stumbling upon unexpected items, hybrid devices and weird machines. Objects of this type are scattered throughout the itinerary of the exhibition *Abstract Sex: We don't have any clothes, only equipment*, embodying the convoluted agencies desire has had in recent history, starting from the example of the three anecdotes that introduce the project. Some of the works on view evoke the close relationship between contemporary forms of pleasure and globalised forms of consumption, coming to grips with the ambivalent consequences of the virtual. Others explore techniques of appropriation and cross-dressing as emancipating moments of production of subjectivities that elude the dominant cultural categories. Finally, the show focusses on the body as a porous wrapper for the meeting of different organisms and interests, somatic and political machinery whose orifices become channels for collective experimentation with new mythologies.

In the words of the curators: "While the radical experiences of the 1970s invoked emancipating and revolutionary strategies of desire as a possibility of escape from the capitalist apparatus of control, the contemporary 'libidinal society' seems to have tamed desire, directing it towards objects for consumption and normalised lifestyles, suggested online by algorithmic structures. Terms such as pleasure, sex and love have been completely integrated into what has been defined by Paul B. Preciado as the 'pharmacopornographic regime'. What type of strategies and allies exist in the reappropriation of desire, emancipating it from the dichotomies and values imposed by the techno-patriarchy?"

Borrowing the title of an essay by Luciana Parisi, the exhibition *Abstract Sex* operates in a context in which our subjectivity is only one of the forces that cross the body, which has become a porous platform of information exchange, where the microscopic politics of bacteria and viruses run up against the macro-politics of the socio-cultural and economic system in which we live. In a historical era in which the very definition of the "human being" is increasingly negotiable, *Abstract Sex* suggests themes such as dis-identification, post-pornography, opacity and hybridization as possible ambits of production of autonomy.

The **artists and galleries** invited to take part in the exhibition are:

Iván Argote, VERMEHLO Sao Paulo
Josefin Arnell, LILY ROBERT Paris
Marcel Bascouard, CHRISTOPHE GAILLARD Paris
Benni Bosetto, ADA Roma
Candice Breitz, KOW Berlin, Madrid
Simon Fujiwara, DVIR Tel Aviv, Brussels
Thomas Hämén, ISSUES Stockholm
Barbara Hammer, KOW Berlin, Madrid
Corrado Levi, RIBOT Milano
Sidsel Meineche Hansen, RODEO London, Piraeus
Jacopo Miliani, ROSA SANTOS Valencia
Athena Papadopoulos, EMALIN London
Joanna Piotrowska, MADRAGOA Lisbon
Agnieszka Polska, GEORG KARGL Vienna
Karol Radziszewski, BWA WARSZAWA Warsaw
Steve Reinke, ISABELLA BORTOLOZZI Berlin
Tom of Finland, ESPACIO MINIMO Madrid
Wu Tsang, ISABELLA BORTOLOZZI Berlin
Anna Uddenberg, KRAUPA-TUSKANY ZEIDLER Berlin
Andra Ursuța, MASSIMO DE CARLO Milano, London, Hong Kong

Biographical notes

Lucrezia Calabrò Visconti

Curator Abstract Sex: We don't have any clothes, only equipment

Lucrezia Calabrò Visconti is an independent curator based in Italy. In her independent practice she develops research-based exhibitions and public programmes, often engaging in collaborative projects with a hybrid, interdisciplinary form. Her recent projects include: *Get Rid of Yourself (Ancora Ancora Ancora)*, Fondazione Baruchello, Roma; *Abracadabra*, 6th International Biennale for Young Art, Moscow; *Why Is Everybody Being So Nice?*, De Appel and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; *Dear Betty: Run Fast, Bite Hard!*, GAMeC, Bergamo. In 2017 she founded The School of the End of Time with Ambra Pittoni and Paul-Flavien Enriquez-Sarano. Her writings have appeared in contemporary art magazines and catalogues, and she has edited publications, recently including *The New Work Times* for Maurizio Cattelan. Since 2018 she has been in charge of the Young Curators Residency Programme by Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Torino. She gained education and training at De Appel, Amsterdam; Campo12, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Torino; IUAV, Venezia; Artists Space, New York.

Guido Costa

Curator Abstract Sex: We don't have any clothes, only equipment

Guido Costa lives in Torino, where in 1999 he opened the gallery Guido Costa Projects, collaborating with Italian artists, including Gianluca and Massimiliano De Serio, Manuele Cerutti, Cuoghi Corsello, and many international artists, curating in many cases their first shows in Italy or in Europe, such as Nan Goldin, William Eggleston, John Baldessari, Richard Prince, Damien Hirst. In 1995, with Gigi Giannuzzi, he founded the West Zone (later Trolley) publishing house, specializing in photography, with offices in London. From 2005 to 2015 he acted as an expert consultant for Fondazione Spinola Banna of Poirino, which he founded. He has written many essays on contemporary art and photography, and edited many books for Italian and international publishers, particularly with the artist Nan Goldin, producing all her books and monographs from 1996 to the present.

Visitors to this exhibition must be over 18 years of age.

Special Project Partner



Kristina Ti, special partner of the project, has created a t-shirt for the occasion with the exhibition graphics, in collaboration with the studio FIONDA of Torino. The Limited Edition KTI x Artissima will be on sale at the KTI STORE TORINO on Via Maria Vittoria 18 during the fair, and will accompany "VM18", the new capsule collection of lingerie by Kristina Ti, an expression of feminine allure dedicated to the Kristina Ti woman.

Media Partner



**ARTISSIMA – International Fair of Contemporary Art
Oval, Lingotto Fiere Torino**

31 October 2019 | Press presentation, preview, opening

1–2–3 November 2019

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