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Contemporanee e Periferie Urbane



la Biennale di Venezia

57. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Padiglione Italia

Italian Pavilion 57th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia

May 13 – November 26, 2017

Il mondo magico

curated by Cecilia Alemani

Giorgio Andreotta Calò, Roberto Cuoghi, Adelita Husni-Bey

Director-General, DGAAP and Italian Pavilion Commissioner

Federica Galloni

Il mondo magico, curated by **Cecilia Alemani**, presents the work and research of **three Italian artists—Giorgio Andreotta Calò, Roberto Cuoghi, and Adelita Husni-Bey**—who show a new faith in the **transformative power of the imagination** and an interest in magic. Through myriad references to fancy, fantasy, and fable, **they turn art into a tool for inhabiting the world in all its richness and multiplicity.**

The title of the exhibition is borrowed from the book *Il mondo magico* by Neapolitan scholar **Ernesto de Martino**, who conducted seminal research into the anthropological function of magic. De Martino spent years studying a range of rituals, describing them as devices through which individuals try to regain control in times of uncertainty and reassert their presence in the world. *Il mondo magico*, written during World War II and published in 1948, ushered in a series of reflections and analyses of a body of beliefs, rites and myths which de Martino continued to explore for decades, as one can see from both his “Southern” trilogy (*Morte e pianto rituale*, *Sud e Magia*, *La terra del rimorso*) and the collection of writings posthumously published as *La fine del mondo*.

Within the landscape of contemporary Italian art, Giorgio Andreotta Calò, Roberto Cuoghi, and Adelita Husni-Bey use magic as a cognitive and expressive device for reconstructing reality, forging complex personal cosmologies. These three artists see themselves not just as fabricators of artworks, but as active interpreters and creators of the world, which they reinvent through magic and the imagination. For Andreotta Calò, Cuoghi, and Husni-Bey, magic is not an escape into the depths of irrationality so much as a new way of experiencing reality. They do not share any particular stylistic tendency, but rather the impulse to develop complex aesthetic universes that eschew the documentary-style narrative found in much recent art, relying instead on a form of storytelling woven from myths, rituals, beliefs, and fairy tales. *Il mondo magico* therefore sees the artist not just as a fabricator of works and objects, but above all a guide, interpreter, and creator of possible worlds. Like the rituals described by de Martino, the works of Andreotta Calò,

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Cuoghi, and Husni-Bey present situations of crisis that are resolved through processes of aesthetic and ecstatic transfiguration. If one looks closely, these works offer up the image of a country—both real and fanciful—where ancient traditions coexist with new global languages and vernaculars, and where reality and imagination melt together into a magical new world.

For *Il mondo magico*, Alemani has invited **Giorgio Andreotta Calò, Roberto Cuoghi, and Adelita Husni-Bey** to create **three new projects specifically commissioned and produced for the Italian Pavilion**

Cecilia Alemani's project *Il mondo magico* is perfectly attuned to Christine Macel's overall concept for the 57th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. VIVA ARTE VIVA revolves around an idea of humanism that celebrates art's capacity to help individuals avoid being overpowered by the forces governing our world, forces which when given free rein can gravely circumscribe the human dimension.

In conjunction with *Il mondo magico*, a program of educational activities geared to students from Italy's public art academies will be organized with the sponsorship of MiBACT's Directorate-General of Contemporary Art and Architecture, and Urban Peripheries, in a calendar of events curated by Cecilia Alemani and Marta Papini

The Italian Pavilion has been made possible in part by support from FENDI, main sponsor of the exhibition *Il mondo magico*.

Technical sponsors of the Italian Pavilion are Biodesign, Crioforma, Laser Digital Film, Fonderia Battaglia, DLW flooring GmbH., Interlinea, Italgelatine, Oikos. Special Thanks to Dario Paini Acoustic Design.

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Lastly, thanks to La Biennale di Venezia for the ongoing support and enormous professionalism of everyone who has worked so tirelessly to assist the Italian Pavilion team.

www.ilmondomagico2017.it

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