

PRESS RELEASE

Istituzione Bologna Musei | Villa delle Rose

Mariella Simoni. 1975 - 2018

Curated by Barbara Vanderlinden

29 September - 11 November 2018

Opening Friday 28 September 2018 at 5.30 pm

With *Mariella Simoni. 1975 - 2018*, Villa delle Rose stays faithful to its new exhibition philosophy based, since 2018, on international positioning and projects. Thanks to the work of curator **Barbara Vanderlinden**, the exhibition re-discovers and re-interprets the almost forty-year-long career of an important Italian artist, who has always used her being open to the world and her nomadic attitude as main personal and artistic signature style.

The exhibition, opening on **September 28** at 5.30 pm and then open to the public from **September 29 until November 11, 2018**, includes about **twentyfive** works covering the period ranging from her beginnings in the Seventies up to her most recent developments, and displays the **different techniques** used by the artist over time: from installation to painting, from drawings to ceramics, to interventions including botanical elements or glass. Some major works, which were part of seminal exhibitions that contributed to the evolution of her artistic career, have been reconstructed and made visible again after forty years at Villa delle Rose, such as *Cinque stanze* (Five Rooms) - installation made in 1978 in her Milanese flat of Via Crivelli just a few steps away from the Luigi De Ambrogi Gallery or *Sedia* (Chair), displayed inside *All'altezza del cuore* (At the height of the heart), at the Karen and Jean Bernier Gallery of Athens in 1980. In 1978 there was a connection with the Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, whose legacy has been taken over by MAMbo: with her intervention called *Sciarada*, *Mariella Simoni* joins *Cara morte* (Gavirate, Varese, 30 April - 21 May 1978), an event organized by the former GAM director, Franco Solmi, in order to establish a sort of "twinning" on the occasion of the great multi-location exhibition *Metafisica del Quotidiano* (June - September 1978), including the documentation in the exhibition catalogue.

The very special nature of the *Mariella Simoni's* work makes work selection very hard: on the one hand a wide range of techniques, on the other a rather limited number of recurring themes to which she likes to go back to, each time with a new perspective and always using different media. Given all that, the curatorial intention of *Barbara Vanderlinden* was not specifically to set up a retrospective of the artist's career based on a homogeneous corpus of her works, she tried instead to shed new light on **hidden connections** generating new and unexpected associations.

The selected works, displayed on both floors of Villa delle Rose, mainly refer to three major stepping stones in the artist's career: the installations of the first period (1976-1980), the paintings made between the 80's and the 2000's and some new site-specific paintings and interventions.

Mariella Simoni, born in Desenzano del Garda in 1948, studied Art History and Philosophy between Parma and Milan, during the 70's she was in Paris to attend the workshops of psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. She spent different periods of her life abroad living for a while, and sometimes more than once, in cities like Paris, Vienna, Milan, Athens, New York and Tokyo. She organized her residences and her artist's studios in several places, from Desenzano, in Italy, to France, Belgium, Austria and Greece never settling down and often choosing locations completely surrounded by nature.

The constant mobility between different places and the journeys leading to mental pathways resulting in more travelling and stays, were the backbone of her life and are mirrored in her works: her **installations** are real "living rooms" in which the basic life elements are both animate and inanimate, where often objects are covered by plants, where living organisms can balance or upset life. The artists made her **paintings** like a *performer*, as writes Barbara Vanderlinden in the catalogue: "*always putting layers of movement on her large wooden panels, ongoing movements that went on for longer periods, sometimes weeks, and hence represent and expressed the time she lived somewhere. It represent the adventures of her soul among the many artists and places she came across*".

The exhibition, that creates a unique dialogue between the installations and the both large and small paintings from different periods, which is based on special affinities and not on chronology, underscores some artist's **recurrent themes**: mind, psychology, the issue of "self", psychology, subjectivity in relation different forms of expression. Mariella Simoni, whose success started in the 70's, was not unrelated from the art movements of that time, in particular the Arte Povera movement, nevertheless she kept a clear intellectual independence, her own different approach, characterized by an inner gaze, the willingness to fully expose through each single piece of work her creative process and the emotional content.

In one of the essays of the catalogue Denys Zacharopoulos writes: "*Invoking the theory and history of art as well as artistic action and emotion, her language organizes the violent encounter of cation and matter, intensity and expanse, sense and signification, idea and action. The question of presence and absence is immediately central to her art and to her dogged research. It is this question that endlessly determines the physical intensity of the pictorial practice that she develops and the mental expanse of her own specific poetic dimension*".

By bringing back to the a large audience, made of both laymen and experts, an artist whose complex work has not been carefully studied yet, the exhibition aims at being just an introduction and not a final interpretation, in order to trigger a deeper and thoughtful analysis of her mindset and work in relation to contemporary art. Denys Zacharopoulos continues: "*Mariella Simoni is a prophetic artist, a painter of infinite movement and consoling thought. At a time when the world seems to be collapsing on all sides, her work rises up before us and gently holds the gaze before the final horizon*".

Mariella Simoni. 1975 - 2018 is matched to a rich picture **catalogue**, holding the same title, published by **Edizioni MAMbo**, and including forewords by both Roberto Grandi and Lorenzo Balbi, a special essay by curator Barbara Vanderlinden as well as other essays on the artist by Yehuda E. Safran and Denys Zacharopoulos and also an interview with Mariella Simoni by Lorenzo Balbi and Barbara Vanderlinden.

On Fridays the exhibition will be open from 2.00 pm until 6.00 pm, on Saturdays and Sundays from 10.00 am until 6.30 pm.

The **Educational Department of MAMbo** will carry out a guided tour every Saturday at 5.00 pm (on September 29 and October 27 with Lorenzo Balbi), while on Sundays from 2.30 pm until 6.30 pm a free-of-charge mediation service will be available to visitors.

Sunday, October 7 at 4.00 pm will be held the workshop for families with children aged 5 to 11 *Far away from me. How art leads beyond the real.*

On the occasion of the 14th Giornata del Contemporaneo (*Day of Contemporary*) promoted by AMACI - Associazione dei Musei d'Arte Contemporanea Italiani, Saturday October 13 the entrance to the exhibition will be free.

Thanks for the precious collaboration to: Konstantinos Papageorgiou, Elisa Ghidini, Francesca Cavola and the collaborators of Crown World Wide - department of Fine Arts in Milan, F.G. Pasquini, Luigi Margelli, Cose d'altre Case.

General info:

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Technical data sheet

Exhibition:

Mariella Simoni. 1975 - 2018

Curated by:

Barbara Vanderlinden

Promoted by:

Istituzione Bologna Musei | Area Arte Moderna e Contemporanea

Venue:

Villa delle Rose
via Saragozza 228/230 | 40135 Bologna (Italy)

Opening period:

29 September - 11 November 2018

Opening:

Friday 28 September 2018 5 pm

Opening hours:

Fridays 2.00 pm - 6.00 pm | Saturdays and Sundays 10.00 pm - 6.30 pm

Entrance:

standard ticket € 5 | concessions € 3

free for the holders of the "Musei Metropolitani Bologna" Card | Saturday 13 October 2018 in the occasion of the 14th Giornata del Contemporaneo promoted by AMACI - Associazione dei Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Italiani

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