

ERMES - ERMES

Ermes - Ermes is pleased to announce an exhibition of the French artist Nicole Gravier. This will be Gravier's first solo show with the gallery.

Pordenone, October 21, 2019

Dear Nicole,

I am back to visit my parents for a few days, before going to Turin where I am going to meet Ilaria.

I am writing to you from my teenage bedroom. It happens to many, I guess, that the room where you grew up slowly turns into a sort of memorial to whom you were: there's a drawing Vincenzo made of me in high school, Yellow Submarine-style, with hair down to my shoulders; the ticket to Michael Jackson's last Italian concert in San Siro in 1997 (I went with my older cousin Raffaella); a picture I took in Romagna of a stone stele with a skull carved on it, and stuck between the jaw and the cheekbone, a bird's nest.

I wonder how it is for you, to look back at the work you did 40 years ago. Do you see yourself younger, maybe more naïve - or more ambitious? Do you remember your intentions, or do they blur with what you think of this body of work now? While I am making braids to a troll with long blue hair I found in a drawer, I wonder if it makes sense to bother about your intentions. Is that bad art critique? You know, someone would usually ask you who you studied with, whom you were close to as an artist, what you were reading, which movies and exhibitions you saw...

I keep going back though to the thought that the Italy you lived in when you were 30 years old or so is the same that I was born into, right here, where I am writing. From this room, your fotoromanzi remind me above all of the magazine Grand Hotel, which I used to find in some boxes in the garage, and which I would read right there, alone. I was actually not very interested in the fotoromanzi, and would immediately flip to the last few pages at the end, where there were all those silly ads of improbable products such as X-ray glasses to see underneath the clothes, do you remember those ads?

I read about your work, about how it comments on the passive role of women in society - often waiting, laying down, with the camera's eye towering over you. I do not see rage though, maybe not even subversion, or parody; you seem to take fotoromanzi very seriously, and to respect them.

Back then, you seemed to be so young and already so serene. And I am trying with my writing to get to the same lightness, the same joy. Are you still the same?

All my very best, Pietro

Pietro Rigolo

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Nicole Gravier (1949, FR) studied at the Académie de Beaux Arts in Aix-en-Provence and at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan, graduating in painting. She was professor of Artistic Anatomy at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bergamo, Naples and Florence and at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan until the end of 2017.

Selected exhibitions: (2019) *The unexpected subject. 1978 Art and Feminism in Italy*, curated by Marco Scotini, Raffaella Perna, FM Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea, Milan, IT; (2018) *L'altro sguardo, Fotografie italiane 1965-2018*, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome, IT; *MAGMA, Body and Words in Italian and Lithuanian Women's Art from 1965 to the Present*, curated by Benedetta Carpi De Resmini, Laima Kreivytė, Istituto Centrale per la Grafica, Rome, IT; (2016) *La parola agli artisti. Arte e Impegno a Milano nelle anni '60*, curated by Cristina Casero, Elena di Rado, Museum of Contemporary Art, Lissone, IT; (2015) *Altra Misura. Arte, fotografia e femminismo in Italia negli Anni '70*, Galleria Fritelli Arte Contemporanea, Florence, IT; *L'altro sguardo, Fotografie italiane 1965-2015*, Triennale di Milano, Milan, IT; (2014) *Looking Glass: Three Feminist Ways to Self-portrait*, Galleria Ciocca Arte Contemporanea, Milan, IT; (2010) *Amore A- Meno*, curated by Elisabeth Longari, Palazzo Tornielli, Novara, IT; (1999) *Beyond the Photographic Frame*, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, US; *54 artistes visif et 25 poètes interpretent la Publicité*, curated by Elio Santarella, Maria Teresa La Notte, Spazio Console, Milan, IT; (1997) *Vraiment. Féminisme et Art*, Centre National Art Contemporain, Grenoble, FR; (1982) *Typish Frau*, Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, DE; *Mannersm, A theory of culture*, curated by Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, CA; (1980) Venice Biennale, *The Time of the Museum: Special Projects*, Venice, IT; *Kunst im sozialem Kontext*, Kunstverein Karlsruhe, Karlsruhe, DE; (1979) *7X7/Sette critici per sette artiste*, Loggia Rucellai, Florence, IT; (1976) *Europe-America. The different avant-gardes*, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, Rome, IT; (1975) *Magma*, curated by Romana Loda, Castel Oldofredi, Iseo; *Solo show*, Galleria Monti/Sperone, Rome, IT (1973) *Contemporanea*, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, Villa Borghese, Rome, IT; *Solo show*, Multitudes Gallery, Paris, FR; *Solo show*, Galleria la Bertesca, Genoa, IT.