

Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro
presents

PROJECT ROOM #14
Rosa in mano

Nevine Mahmoud, Margherita Raso with Derek MF Di Fabio
curated by Eva Fabbris

10 September – 17 December 2021

Opening: Friday 10 September 2021, 11 am – 8pm

Milan, 3 September 2021. With the exhibition *Rosa in mano* [Handful pink] of **Nevine Mahmoud** and **Margherita Raso** with **Derek MF Di Fabio**, from **11 September to 17 December 2021**, the **Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro** presents the **second appointment** in the 2021 exhibition cycle of the *Project Room*, an “observatory” project devoted to the most recent developments on the international artistic panorama, this year entrusted to guest curator Eva Fabbris.

The set of exhibited artworks is a **dance of positions and physical touches**; between presences and absences, wholes and parts, *Rosa in mano* is an exhibition in which sculpture is offered as a celebration of the vitality of the body. The works on display have a marked tactile, even sensual quality, which is manifest in the choice of subjects and rooted in their executive nature.

In the wake of figures such as Niki de Saint Phalle and Alina Szapocznikow, the bodies become fantastic and vital, physicalisations of desire in which sensations mingle.

Nevine Mahmoud (London, 1988 – lives and works in Los Angeles) and **Margherita Raso** (Lecco 1991 – lives and works between Basel and Milan) both root their practice in **a melee with materials and techniques: sculpted or blown** works for one, **works on a mechanical or hand loom** for the other. For Mahmoud the result consists of objects in their own right, which are **markedly voluptuous representations** of pieces of bodies or natural elements that present themselves as closed forms, **self-referential sculptural worlds**. Raso’s fabrics, on the other hand, stand as works without a stable, pre-established form: surfaces of great tactile and visual quality that occupy spaces hanging from the ceiling, clinging to walls, resting on found surfaces.

The exchange between the two artists has expanded thanks to **Derek MF Di Fabio** (Milan, 1987 – lives and works between Perdaxius in Sardinia and Berlin). Di Fabio’s work often consists of workshops, the end result of which is of relative importance in object terms. Their poetic attention is shifted onto situations, onto how these can be listened to and interpreted.

In *Rosa in mano* Raso presents a new work: a fabric with a width of more than 3 metres in which the interest in the reproduction of the superimposed silhouettes of bodies takes on an animated, almost narrative direction, showing positions of verve and others that seem to be alluding to falls. Raso's motifs emerge from the interweaving of threads woven on a Jacquard loom, at times apparently abstract, at times more eminently figurative: in the latter case, what happens on each cloth is the appearance of a whole silhouette of bodies, repeated and superimposed in a rapid pattern that could be reminiscent of the movements of cartoon animation, or short sections of chronophotography. The material effect of the fabric, with its chiaroscuro, interplay of opaque-polished, the contradictory sense of draped weight and the impermanence of form, precedes and looms over the possibility, for the viewer, to recognize the subject.

Mahmoud follows a more "surrealist-esque" trajectory, translating parts of the female body and alluring fruit into the smoothest of marbles or into vaguely decadent blown glass items. In a continuous reciprocity of surfaces, also involving the stands – on each occasion the sculptures rest in turn on opaque or transparent, coloured and linear bases, her sculptures playing a double role of seduction – the sensuality of the subject (a tongue, a breast, a peach) is brought out and contradicted by the cold, composed tactility of marble and glass. In the exhibition, the selection of Mahmoud's works offers evidence of the cohesiveness of her production between 2017 and 2021, in a recurrence and variance of themes and materials (ranging from marble to alabaster, to glass) that confirm the focus of her sculptor's gaze on the vitality of bodies.

The works of the two artists are at the centre of a workshop run by Di Fabio at Casa di Reclusione in Vigevano starting from February 2020, conducted both face-to-face and in the form of letters. Confirming the physical power emanated by these sculptures, Di Fabio takes them metaphorically into the prison through images and stories, offering them to a group of inmates as stimuli for a writing workshop that also passes through engagement with several literary and theoretical authors (James Ballard, Dino Buzzati, William Gibson, Alexis Pauline Gumbs...). In the artist's words: *"The workshop proposes sculpture to the participants as the sum of gestures and decisions to be investigated through narrations and the invocation of what is other. The theme is the material and sensitive relationship with something that is not present, the physical relationship with memory"*.

The result of the workshop is an audio track, which can be downloaded free of charge from the Foundation's website and can act as an audio guide for the exhibition.

Since the workshop is still in progress, a first part of the materials will be presented at the inauguration: the complete work will be presented during the autumn.

Margherita Raso's work was produced with the support of Clerici Tessuto & C. SpA.

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PRACTICAL INFORMATION - PROJECT ROOM #14

Title:	<i>Rosa in mano</i>
Artist:	Nevine Mahmoud, Margherita Raso with Derek MF Di Fabio
Curated by:	Eva Fabbris
Period:	September 10 – December 17, 2021
Location:	Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro Via Vigevano 9 – 20144 Milano
Opening hours:	From Tuesday to Friday From 11 am to 1 pm and from 2 pm to 7 pm
Special openings:	11, 12, 18, 19 September / 3, 17 October 7, 21 November / 5 December from 11 am to 1 pm and from 2 pm to 6 pm
Access mode:	Free entrance Access is allowed to a maximum of 5 people at a time. Access is allowed with COVID-19 green certifications only.
Info:	Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro via Vigevano 9 – 20144 Milano info@fondazionearnaldopomodoro.it +39 02 890 753 94 fondazionearnaldopomodoro.it
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BIOGRAPHIES:

Nevine Mahmoud (1988, London) lives and works in Los Angeles. In her practice she emphasizes through playful and erotic contradictions, dictated by the choice of themes and materials, the vitality and intimacy of bodies. She received her MFA from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles in 2014. Selected solo exhibitions include: Barnsdall Art Park Foundation, Hollyhock House, Los Angeles (forthcoming); M+ B, Los Angeles (forthcoming); Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford (forthcoming); *Bella donna*, Nina Johnson, Miami (2019); *belly room* at Soft Opening, London (2019); *f o r e p l a y*, M+B, Los Angeles (2017); *Three Isolated Effects*, Lock Up International, Los Angeles (2016). Selected group exhibitions include: *Psychosomatic*, Various Small Fires, Los Angeles (2021); *Sculpture-Lampe*, Soft Opening, London (2019); *Holly Coulis. Nevine Mahmoud & Christina Ramberg*, Simon Lee Gallery, Hong Kong (2019); *Math Bass. Nevine Mahmoud*, The Gallery at Michaels, Los Angeles (2019); *The Artist is Present*, curated by Maurizio Cattelan, Yuz Museum, Shanghai (2018); *The Poet, the Critic and the Missing*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2016).

Margherita Raso (b. 1991, Lecco) lives and works between Basel and Milan. Her interest in the Jacquard-weaving technique is a starting point through which she investigates the image, its texture, and its relationship with time and space. In a melee with the history of technique and the history of materials—with their geo-political implications Raso acts “from within” the tradition of textile production.

Her recent solo exhibitions include: *Casting The Tempo*, Santa Maria in Lucedio Abbey, Vercelli (2021); *Canal*, Bible, New York (2018); *Piercing*, Fanta-MLN, Milan (2017). Her works have been included in group exhibitions at: MACRO, Rome (2021); Villa Olmo, Como (2021); Fanta-MLN, Milan (2020); WPN-NYC, New York (2019); WallRiss, Fribourg (2019); MAMbo, Bologna (2018); Armada, Milan (2016); Komplot, Bruxelles (2015).

Derek MF Di Fabio (Milan, 1987) lives between Berlin and Perdaxius. Their works that include scenography, sculpture, installations, video and events are made up of experiences that can be re-lived through shared-memory and can no longer be circumscribed by who/how/where. Since 2010, Derek has been part of Cherimus, an association that aims to contribute to the development of the social and cultural patrimony of South-West Sardinia through contemporary art. Cherimus also seeks to open this region up to inputs and experiences coming from international cooperation projects focused on revitalizing and transforming the characters of its territory.

Derek co-funded Motel Lucie (2009-2012) and 2008daughter, a sartorial-production project through performative practices. Selected solo and group exhibitions include:

BARK, Almanac Projects, Turin (2021); *GALLA*, curated by Valentina Sansone, L'Ascensore OFF at Museo di Zoologia Doderlein, Palermo (2019), Tile Projects Space, Milan (2017); Musil di Cedegolo, curated by In Fact and In Fiction (2015/2016). In 2019 Di Fabio organized *Erratic Orbits*, an itinerant reading that hosted the artist m. They travel thought public and private performances, from PAV - Turin with Luca Garino to Berlin.

Eva Fabbris (1979) lives and works in Milan. Exhibition Curator at Fondazione Prada, she is also active as an independent curator and art historian. In this capacity, she curates the 2021 cycle of Project

Rooms at Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro in Milan, including the solo exhibition of Belgian artist Kasper Bosmans from February to June 2021 and "Rosa in Mano".

In autumn 2021 Eva Fabbris also curates the exhibitions "Alessandro Pessoli. TESTA CRISTIANA" at the Chiostri di S.Eustorgio in Milan and, together with Andrea Viliani, "Diego Marcon. The Parents' Room" at the Museo Madre in Naples. Other institutions that have hosted exhibitions curated by Fabbris include: the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco in Monte Carlo (2016), the Triennale in Milan (2016), Fondazione Morra in Naples (2013-2014) and Galerie de l'erg in Brussels (2012-2013). Fabbris is also the author of contributions published in exhibition catalogues, volumes and magazines of an international nature.

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I have always felt the need for concrete involvement from a social point of view: leaving your studio, where you work and are protected, is not a faculty: it is a duty. The sculptor's task is to get involved and engage with the urban fabric of the city, making people feel the public importance of all art, not just his own.
Arnaldo Pomodoro

Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro - established on **7 April 1995** by the will of Arnaldo Pomodoro - has the task of **preserving, enhancing and promoting the work of its founder**, as well as carrying out **various kinds of initiatives** (events, exhibitions, publications, etc.) aimed at forging a connection with the public, promoting **knowledge and deepening of modern and contemporary art**. Its headquarters is in Via Vigevano 9 in Milan, adjacent to the artist's **Studio and Archive**.

One of the Foundation's purposes is also **to support the growth of new generations of artists**, in particular through the **Arnaldo Pomodoro Sculpture Prize**, awarded every two years by an International Selection Committee, and the **Project Rooms**, an initiative started in 2010 with the aim of establishing a real observatory on the most recent developments in the contemporary art scene. With the **Project Rooms**, each year the Foundation's exhibition space welcomes a different guest curator in charge of identifying artists - preferably sculptors under 40 - who are asked to create an intervention that involves the entire exhibition space.

From the outpost in Via Vigevano 9, the Foundation's action then extends to the entire city and hinterland territory thanks to the rich program of **guided tours and workshops** - for adults, families, groups and schools - which involve, among others, also the environmental work *Ingresso nel labirinto* (Entering the labyrinth) in Via Solari 35 in Milan and the De Andreis Art Foundry in Rozzano, as well as through the **loans** that bring the works of his **Collection** into exhibitions, museums, squares and public spaces throughout Italy and the world.

So that the Foundation, far from being a static and conservative structure, can perform the function of a real inventive laboratory, almost experimental, thus aimed at building a deep and global involvement with artists, critics and the public.
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