

Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro
presents

PROJECT ROOM #17

Lito Kattou

Whisperers

curated by Chiara Nuzzi

First appointment with *Corpo Celeste* (*Celestial Body*), the new exhibition cycle from *Project Room*, the Fondazione's "observatory" project on the contemporary arts, entrusted for this edition to curator **Chiara Nuzzi** and focusing on the possibilities of rethinking and reimagining reality in a context of crisis.

6 April – 9 June 2023

Milan, 15 March 2023. From 6 April 2023, with the exhibition *Whisperers* by Lito Kattou (Cyprus, 1990), comes the launch of *Corpo Celeste* (*Celestial Body*), the new exhibition cycle from *Project Room*, the Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro's "observatory" project devoted to developments on the international artistic panorama, which this year is entrusted to curator **Chiara Nuzzi** (Naples, 1986).

Inspired by the collection of essays with the same name by writer **Anna Maria Ortese** and her attempts to "return to the real the meaning of belonging to another reality, larger and more unknowable"¹, *Corpo Celeste* (*Celestial Body*) is structured into two solo exhibitions, the first devoted to **Lito Kattou** and the subsequent one, envisaged for September 2023, to **Paul Maheke** (France, 1985). In both exhibitions **sculpture** is an instrument for the construction of **other bodies, hybridized** with materials, nature and the animal world, to **inhabit new worlds**. In these possible *worlds beyond*, Kattou and Maheke explore the potential of sculptural materials, constructing environments and narrations that mine the present and interrogate the future. The artists develop **two site-specific projects** that blend different media to build **immersive environmental installations**: the Fondazione's exhibition space thus becomes a landscape populated by almost **metaphysical** images and presences.

Whisperers is the **first solo exhibition in an Italian institution** by **Lito Kattou**, whose research is influenced by the **natural, social and political context of the Mediterranean region**. Inspired by local mythologies, stories and archaeologies, into her practice the artist has inserted themes such as the reconciliation between **life and death** and acceptance of the **linearity and circularity of time**, through which he reflects on the **coexistence of different realities**. Her works – **bodies, hybrid and abstract creatures, anthropomorphic or animal, incorporated within which are natural and cosmic elements** –

¹ Anna Maria Ortese, *Corpo Celeste*, Milan, Adelphi, 1997, p. 164.

analyzes the process of **changing matter** in time, the theme of **otherness and unknown space-time scenarios**.

The series ***Whisperers*** (*coloro che sussurrano*) from 2022, like the previous ***Harvesters*** (*coloro che raccolgono*), focuses on the idea of **community** in a timeless setting that identifies new **strategies of coexistence**.

For the spaces of the Fondazione the artist has created ***Whisperer I, II, III and IV***, **four imposing sculptures** made of aluminium, steel, acrylic, nickel-plated copper and biodegradable plastic, representing **four components of a community** – linked together by symbols, signs and fragments composing a **familiar grammar** – connected to ***Whisperer V***, a **fifth sculpture** mounted on the façade of the **Fondazione ICA Milano**, an intervention acting as a bridge between the two institutions, thus solemnly establishing the **collaboration**.

In the sculptures, Kattou assimilates **human and non-human elements**, figures deriving from nature and the animal world, in an attempt to imagine a **new form of existence** constantly adapting and transforming with the surrounding environmental forces.

All endowed with the **same face**, in a frozen landscape at **sunset**, the **black surfaces of the bodies**, arranged so as to mark out the space structuring the route for the public, are interrupted by painted parts that highlight some of their gestures, accompanied by figures of animals, flowers and butterflies, **woven baskets** recalling not only the **artist's origins**, but also the **Cypriot colonial period**.

The basket is the cue for a broader reflection on the cultural evolution of humanity: as writer Ursula K. Le Guin states in *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction* (1986), “*the first cultural device was probably a recipient [...] and that the earliest cultural inventions must have been a container to hold gathered products*”². A vision that disempowers the object–weapon as the main element of evolution and instead tells a story of **support and collaboration, of intelligence and common practice used to the benefit of the community**.

Whisperers represents a space where it is possible to **accept coexistence** with different entities and to imagine alternative approaches and methods for **living together**, within a perspective that places the **community at the centre** and increases the awareness of the needs of **other species** and for the **safeguarding of the planet**.

The curatorial project for the *Project Room* is linked to the research conducted for the exhibition of the *Open Studio* cycle that is under way at Arnaldo Pomodoro's studio. *The Negation of Form. Arnaldo Pomodoro Between Minimalism and Counterculture* (curated by Federico Giani, open for visits every Sunday until 28 May) in fact investigates Arnaldo Pomodoro's artistic production between 1966 and 1970, the artist's “American years”, distinguished by experimentation with the concepts of *void, negative space*

² Elisabeth Fisher, *Woman's Creation* in Ursula K. Le Guin, *Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places*, New York, Grove Press, 1989, p. 166.

and *negation of form*. **The reflections around these themes therefore act as a unifying feature between the Master's artistic research and that of the young artists involved in the *Project Room*, confirming the Fondazione's intention to develop a cohesive cultural project to underline the **assonances** between themes and research interests of the **new generations** and those that have characterized **Arnaldo Pomodoro's artistic path**, identifying an **intergenerational affinity** that looks at the past and future of the art with new eyes.**

BIOGRAPHIES

Lito Kattou

Lito Kattou (Nicosia, Cyprus, 1990) lives and works in Athens. She studied at the School of Fine Arts in Athens and at the Royal College of Art in London, where she graduated in Sculpture.

Kattou is the winner of the first edition of the Ducato Prize 2019 and in 2018 she received the New Positions Award for Art Cologne. She has been invited and has taken part in residencies including the that of the Fondation Thalie, Brussels 2021; ART HUB Copenhagen Residency 2020; the PCAI Residency 2019 and, in 2017, the Google 89plus residency, curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist and Simone Castets. Kattou has recently had solo exhibitions at: Tranen, Copenhagen; Galeria Duarte Sequeira, Braga; T293, Rome; Artothek, Cologne; Benaki Museum, Athens; Point Center for Contemporary Art and has participated in numerous group exhibitions in galleries, museums and art institutions including: SAVVY Contemporary, the 7th Athens Biennale; Fidelidade Arte, Lisbon; Muzeum Ludwig, Budapest; Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham; Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin; Komplot, Brussels; Benaki Museum and Deste Foundation, Athens. Her works are included in important international private collections including the Dakis Joannou Collection, the collection of the National Bank of Greece, the National Contemporary Art Collection of the Republic of Cyprus, the Deutsche Telekom Collection. Kattou is represented by T293 Gallery, Rome, and Galeria Duarte Sequeira, Braga | Seoul.

www.litokattou.com

Chiara Nuzzi

Curator and researcher, Chiara Nuzzi (Naples, 1986) lives and works in Milan. She graduated from the Cà Foscari University and the IUAV University of Venice. In 2012-13 she participated in the first edition of CAMPO, a program for Italian curators created by the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation in Turin, and in 2014 in the CuratorLab research program for international curators at the Konstfack University in Stockholm. She has collaborated with various public and private institutions in Italy and abroad, and since 2018 she has been the curator and editorial manager of the Fondazione ICA Milano, for which she collaborates in coordinating the exhibition and editorial program. For the Fondazione ICA Milano she curated the exhibitions: Chemutai Ng'ok.

An impression that may possibly last forever (2023); *Small Fixations* (2022); Annette Kelm. *DIE BÜCHER* (2022), and co-curated with Alberto Salvadori the exhibition: Constance Candeloro. *My skincare, my strength* (2022). She also co-curated with Alberto Salvadori the first solo exhibition in Italy of the artist and dancer Simone Forti *Vicino al Cuore/Close to the Heart* (2019-2020) and in 2021 she conceived and curated the digital program ICA COMMITTED dedicated to the digital channel of the foundation, still ongoing. In 2018 she co-curated with Luigi Fassi the collective exhibition *Sense and Sensibilia*, a side-project on the occasion of the Gherdëina Biennale. Between 2017 and 2018, on the occasion of the curatorial residency at the French institution Thankyouforcoming in Nice, she curated the cultural and exhibition program *What happens to people and what happens to the land is the same thing*, created with the support of Mibact, collaborating with artists including Ursula Biemann & Paulo Tavares, Melanie Bonajo, The Karrabing Film Collective and Uriel Orlow. In 2014 she won the CXC (Call for Curators) award promoted by the MART – Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto for the exhibition project *Afterimage. Immagini del Conflitto* (co-curated with Valeria Mancinelli and Stefania Rispoli in 2014-2015 at the Galleria Civica di Trento). In 2015 she co-founded the Florentine festival SONIC SOMATIC, focused on contemporary sound and performative research, of which she is still co-curator today.

PRESS CONTACTS

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PRACTICAL INFORMATION - PROJECT ROOM #17

Title:	<i>Whisperers</i>
Artist:	Lito Kattou
Curated by:	Chiara Nuzzi
When:	April 6 – June 9, 2023
Where:	Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro Via Vigevano 9 – 20144 Milan
Opening days/hours	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday closed Thursday, 11 am – 7 pm Friday, 11 am – 7 pm Saturday, closed domenica, 11 am – 7 pm (last admission: 30 minutes before closing)
How to access:	Free admission
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FONDAZIONE ARNALDO POMODORO

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.

Arnaldo Pomodoro

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