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# NAIVE SET THEORY

Paolo Icaro

Bettina Buck  
Marie Lund  
David Schutter

30 January – 26 March 2016

Curated by Cecilia Canziani and Davide Ferri  
Inaugurazione Sabato 30 Gennaio 18.30 – 24.00

OPENING HOURS DURING ARTE FIERA

Thursday 28: 10.00–20.00; Friday 29: 9.00–20.00;

Saturday 30: 9.00–24.00; Sunday 31: 10.00–20.00

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P420 inaugurates its new space in Bologna, Via Azzo Gardino 9 with two exhibitions curated by Cecilia Canziani and Davide Ferri.

*A set is a gathering together into a whole of definite, distinct objects of our perception or of our thought—which are called elements of the set.*

G. CANTOR, *Naive Set Theory*

The model of the set developed by the German mathematician Georg Cantor (1845 – 1918) at the end of the 19th century, which was fundamental for the growth of modern mathematics, is a theory based on the concept of belonging: a set, to all intents and purposes, is a collection of distinct objects, with the particular characteristic that the elements of the set can themselves be sets. It is a theory that cannot be traced back to definite concepts; it is intuitive, open to paradox and contradiction.

*Naive Set Theory* is a title for two exhibitions: a project by Paolo Icaro, whose works have been chosen to activate a dialogue with an exhibition that includes pieces by Bettina Buck, Marie Lund and David Schutter.

The two exhibitions share the same space, next to each other or literally one inside the other. They can establish a dialogue of contrasts or temporary assonance, bringing connections to light between the poetics of artists who belong to different geographies and backgrounds. Nearly imperceptible resemblances that indicate shared concerns conveyed in different forms.

*Naive Set Theory* is therefore on one hand, an investigation of the work of Paolo Icaro (Turin, 1936), conducted over a very long time span and organized around the work *Cardo e decumano* (2010) which ideally re-orientates the exhibition space and subdivides its boundaries. Around this skeleton composed of two orthogonal dotted lines, formed by numerical variations of modular iron parts, a non-chronological progression of works is organized, with pieces belonging to different periods. The *Lunatici* (Lunatics, 1989) are a set of actions of the hand on a given portion of material; *Lassù: per un blu K* (Up there: for a blue K, 1990) is a work in which the measure of doing extends to encounter infinity in a single point; *Esplosa* (Exploded, 1990) is a sculpture that designs the space, that “makes space” instead of occupying it; *Numericals 1 - 10* (1978), in which a dancer freely interprets a numerical progression, is a performance in which the body becomes sculptural material.

Icaro's works indicate a vocabulary – gravity, levity, reciprocity, excess, limit, gesture, temporary character, body, risk – around which another exhibition unfolds through links and recurrences, with works by Bettina Buck (Cologne, 1974), Marie Lund (Copenhagen, 1976) and David Schutter (Pennsylvania, 1974): a dialogue among works whose trajectories meet and form a constellation of ideas, connections, suggestions.

Thus in *Naive Set Theory* Bettina Buck explores sculpture as a state of momentaneous stasis between germination and collapse, as form that offers itself only temporarily, as time, process, withheld energy, where the body – in its presence or simply evoked – becomes the most precise metaphor, or again as appropriated space,

as in the site-specific intervention in which a barely perceptible line inscribes the zone of passage between the two rooms of the gallery and suggests the reversibility of a space from architectural element to object, sculpture.

Marie Lund investigates the dialectic between full and empty that is a structural part of the language of sculpture. She evokes a volume and analyzes it in its translation in to a surface, in the series *Stills*: six panels composed of curtains faded by time, unstitched and stretched on frames; she portrays the body as a negative in *Attitudes*, and explores the borderline between erasure and rewriting, appropriation and authorship in *The Very White Marbles*.

David Schutter's works are the result of a long visual engagement with paintings as a phenomenal source of perception. Engaging with pre-modern paintings as source material for his works, Schutter seeks the surface effects, brushstrokes, and light within frames of reference that are rendered into the present by his re-performance of the pictures. The gray of his oil paintings is only apparently monochromatic. It is the result of attentive applications of successive layers of color and brush technique of different depth and density, generating the abundant, rich surface of his canvases.

*Naive Set Theory* is therefore one and two (or more) exhibitions built around ideas and intuitions that reference each other, that return interpreted in different ways and forms; punctuations of the display space, paths that meet at multiple points, (narrative) lines that sustain each other: the sets to which the title refers.

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PAOLO ICARO (b. 1936 Turin) lives and works in Tavullia, Pesaro. He took part in the germinal period of Arte Povera in the 1960s, showing work in the most important exhibitions of those years, including *Arte Povera – Im Spazio*, Galleria La Bertesca, Genoa (1967); *Teatro delle mostre*, Galleria La Tartaruga, Rome (1968); *Arte Povera più Azioni Povere*, Amalfi (1968); *Op Losse Schroeven. Situaties en cryptostructures*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1969); *When Attitudes Become Form*, Kunsthalle Bern, Bern (1969). In 1971 he moved to the United States, in Connecticut, where he explored the environmental and performative aspects of his sculptural practice, in relation to the movements of Conceptual Art and Process Art. Starting in the 1980s, after returning to Italy, he has had many solo shows in institutions, including: PAC – Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, Milan (1982); Palazzina dei Giardini, Modena (1987); Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Trent (1995). In 2011 he took part in the 54th Venice Biennale. In 2014 his solo show *Appunti di viaggio 1967-2014* was held at Peep-Hole in Milan.

BETTINA BUCK (b. 1974 Cologne Germany), lives and works in Berlin. She studied at the Academy of Media Arts, Cologne before completing an MA in Fine Art at Goldsmiths College, London. Recent exhibitions include *Tutta l'Italia è silenziosa* (All of Italy is silent), presented across foreign academies, international cultural institutions and embassies in Rome; *To Continue. Notes towards A Sculpture Cycle* at The Nomas Foundation in Rome and *MOTOR: Bettina Buck invites Marie Lund*, at SpaceX, Exeter. Other recent institutional exhibitions include *The Secret Life of Things* at Kai10, Dusseldorf and *A House of Leaves* at The David Roberts Art

Foundation, London in 2013. Last November she inaugurated her third solo show at Rokeby, titled *Monomera/September Shuffle*.

MARIE LUND (b. 1976 Copenhagen) lives and works in London. Recent solo exhibitions include *PIT* at Croy Nielsen, Berlin; *Flush* at Badischer Kunstverein; *Dip* at Laura Bartlett, London; *Drums*, Museo Marino Marini, Florence; and *Back Pack* at Proyectos Monclova, Mexico City. Her work has been featured in exhibitions at Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin; Extra City, Antwerp; Palais De Tokyo, Centre Pompidou, Paris; Kunstmuseum Krefeld; Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit; Cologne Kunstverein; Kunsthalle Mulhouse; De Vleeshal, Middelburg; Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis; The Swiss Institute, New York; CCA Wattis, San Francisco amongst others. Her work is currently on show at Tate Britain, London and Palazzo De' Toschi, Bologna.

DAVID SCHUTTER (USA b. 1974) lives and works in Chicago. He has had solo exhibitions at the Gemäldegalerie Berlin; the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; with Aurel Scheibler, Berlin; Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York; Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago. Concurrent with this exhibition, the artist is featured in *Conversation Piece*, Fondazione Memmo, Rome. His work has been featured in the Glasgow International Biennale, La Magasin- Centre National Art d' Contemporain, Grenoble, and the David Roberts Art Foundation, London. David Schutter is the recipient of a 2015-16 Rome Prize awarded by the American Academy in Rome, where he is currently in residence.