

## ***Ad ampio respiro***

**Thursday 21st October 2021**  
**Opening: 6 pm**  
**Performance: 7.30 pm**  
 21<sup>st</sup> October – 22<sup>nd</sup> December

RITA URSO artopiagallery  
 Via Lazzaro Papi 2, Milano  
**Space inside the courtyard**



Caterina Silva, *Mouth*, 2019, mixed media on canvas, 200x152cm (detail)

RITA URSO artopiagallery is pleased to present the exhibition ***Ad ampio respiro***, a dialogue among the artists **Bea McMahon** (Dublin, 1972), **Vera Pravda** (Monza, 1974) and **Caterina Silva** (Rome, 1983), invited for the first time to confront themselves with the gallery space located in the courtyard – an ex-factory of the end of XIX century that will become its future home. In this space, deliberately essential and unadorned in the settings, the ethereal element weaves the *fil rouge* of the exhibition, becoming body-breath in the works on show.

During the opening there will be the performance *In through the nose, out through the mouth*, conceived by Bea McMahon, with the collaboration of Caterina Silva. The artist stages a political-environmental situation, focusing on certain actions including checking the quality of the air, breathing in, trying to control the movement of people, and breathing out.

Starting from an ethical-ecological reflection but also a spiritual one, *Ad ampio respiro* aims to explore that "silent" communication activity of art - and of ourselves - in close relation to space. The breath of the artwork, of the air, and ours in synchrony. The act of breathing develops on the one hand becoming a telescope on a global problem, the atmospheric pollution, and on the other, with a more intimate and introspective viewpoint, meditating on the element of spontaneity and on the "letting be" of things.

The three artists interpret the gallery environment, each in their own way, as a communicative filter. Bea McMahon's trees, made of plasticized paper painted in natural colours, occupy the space inflating up to the ceiling thanks to a fan. Vera Pravda's paintings, made with special anti-smog paints normally used in construction, literally purify the surrounding air, in the same way as a forest of the same size does. Caterina Silva's canvases, created in connection with the act of breathing in yogic practice, and with its rhythm, let the reality beneath the reality emerge on the painting surface, and the surrounding environment that naturally and spontaneously enters the work, operating a continuous interchangeability between inside and outside.

Breath takes on an installation form and a presence in the space, involving visitors in an experience of osmosis in which their own breaths and those of the works give lungs to the space, and vice versa. The works, like megaphones of vital breaths, show the link between man, environment and art, through the ethereal. This is something only apparently invisible behind the concreteness of reality, but it is always near and part of us.

The title of the exhibition conceptually includes the expression - used in literature, art and music - to mean a breadth of vision and vastness of conception, an intention that will increasingly accompany the gallery in the realisation of its new architectural project and exhibition programme.

Bea McMahon (Dublin, 1972) works with video, installation and performance art. Her work often navigates through conceptions of reality and their corresponding appearances in the outside world. Trained in mathematics, Bea McMahon employs versions and associations of mathematics and physics that play with distinctions between objects, space and time, and symbols while resonating with a poetic form of agency between non-speaking beings and the world. Recent projects include performances at Cave Gallery, Tokyo; FLAM VII Frascati Theatre, Amsterdam; Open Avond(s), De Appel, Amsterdam; International BRUD day, The Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw; Umsteulpung, The XII Baltic Triennial, Vilnius; Evil under the Sun, Volcano Extravaganza, Stromboli. Solo exhibitions include *Floppy Forest*, Treignac Projet, France (2021); *Under Bat Hill*, W139 Amsterdam (2021); *Rank*, Billytown, Den Haag (2017); *BOM*, CCA Derry (2015); *Cover*, Salzburg Kunstverein (2014); Root Temple Bar Gallery and Studios (2012); *Warp and Woof*, CCA Glasgow (2011); <trinity> Flattime House, London, (2011). She has undertaken residencies at Flattime House, London, ACC Gwangju, Korea; The Mattress Factory, Pittsburg; Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam and Via Farini, Milan. She is in the collections of the Irish Museum of Modern Art and FRAC Midi- Pyrenees.

Vera Pravda (Simona Sanvito, Monza, 1974) lives and works in Milan and Warsaw. Graduated in Sciences of the historical-artistic, cinematographic, musical and theatrical heritages at the University of Siena, after years creating art undercover, in 2018 she decides to come out as an artist. She works on long-term series, collaborating and triggering exchanges with numerous institutions. Among the projects, #GREENISGOLD (from 2019), currently only show at Terminal 1 of Milan Malpensa Airport for 2020-21; ARTBREATHING (from 2017) in public and private locations, including Lycée Stendhal, Milan and Casa Famiglia L'abilità, Milan; QUARANTOTTO (2019) during the annual art residency in Villa Greppi, Monticello Brianza; INTER NOS (2021) in Viafarini DOCVA Archive, in art residencies on the Alps (NAHR and Falia), in the Mediterranean area (SUA Festival, Sicily), in the group projects curated by Claudia Zanfi 'ATLAS. Maps and visions from the Mediterranean' and 'Traveling Herbarium' (September 2021 - Milan Design Week in Garibaldi Station, Mantua Literature Festival and Modena Philosophy Festival), and in Mappae, a site-specific project in Spazio Giacomo, run by the G. Carrara Fine Art Academy of Bergamo. She also conducts some curatorial projects, such as /Confini/, a participatory project created during the lockdown in collaboration with Viafarini and Gli Stati Generali and /Krisis/, a series of talks between curators and artists on the most urgent contemporary issues. Pravda is also part of GL - Gruppo di Lavoro, which she founded together with Rebecca Agnes and Stefania Migliorati, and which designs site-specific artistic interventions in public spaces in collaboration with Studio Senzatitolo.

Caterina Silva (Rome, 1983) lives between Rome and London. She investigates the connections between power and language from a silent and non-discursive perspective with which she eludes canonical structures of the production of meaning. Always interested in the relationship between gesture, freedom and mental processes, Silva develops through painting and performance a multiform and layered body of works through an emotional and synthetic language. Silva's exhibitions and performances took place in public and private spaces in Italy and abroad including MACTE Digital for Fondazione MACTE, Termoli, Vortic Collect, London XR, Artissima Present Future, Turin, Bosse&Baum Gallery, London, Fondazione Spinola Banna, Poirino, Galleria Valentina Bonomo, Rome, Asia Culture Center, Gwangju, Galleria Riccardo Crespi, Milan, Museum Centrale Montemartini, Rome, Everad Read-Circa Cape Town, Casa Testori, Milan, Rozenstraat a rose is a rose, Amsterdam, Abstracte, Dordrecht, Oratorio di San Mercurio, Palermo. She was shortlisted for Talent Prize 2020, Ducato Prize 2020, Premio Fabbri 2014 and 2018, Premio Cairo 2015, in 2018 she won the 9th Combat Prize. She was artist in residence at Cité des Arts, Paris, 2013; Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten, Amsterdam, 2015-2014; Asia Culture Center, Gwangju, 2016; NKD, Norway, 2018; ARP, Cape Town 2018; Bocs, curated by Giacinto Di Pietrantonio, Cosenza, 2019; Fondazione Spinola Banna, Poirino, 2019.

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[www.artopiagallery.net](http://www.artopiagallery.net)

### Opening hours

Monday-Friday / 3:00 –7:00 p.m. / Saturday with reservation