

Ornella Cardillo,
Giuseppe Lo Cascio,
Ludovico Orombelli,
Alice Peach,
Matteo Pizzolante

One year after the opening of its new venue, still in Via Lazzaro Papi 2, in the courtyard of the same building that has hosted the gallery for more than twenty years, **Artopia** is pleased to inaugurate the 2024-2025 exhibition season with the group show entitled ***Farewell to the Stage. Tools for reassembly***, with the participation of **Ornella Cardillo, Giuseppe Lo Cascio, Ludovico Orombelli, Alice Peach and Matteo Pizzolante**, curated by Arnold Braho.

Curated by Arnold Braho

From 26.09 to 08.11.2024

The exhibition project intends to investigate the structures of “mise-en-scene”, namely devices supporting the concept of “showing”: from the stage to the archive, from the pictorial image to the idea of the module, up to the exhibition itself, conceived with the aim of activating the gallery space as a subject, and emphasising the perspective points of its architectural features. *Farewell to the Stage. Tools for reassembly* suggests the idea of a desertion from the stage, of a reduction of the platform as a supporting structure: a machine of the world and history seen through a lens capable of highlighting each of its individual gears.

Opening the exhibition in its two entrances are, on the one hand, **Ludovico Orombelli's** wall-painting, a stage emptied of its subjects and intended as a phantasmal reappearance of pictorial images, and on the other hand, **Giuseppe Lo Cascio's** monumental archives, composed in such a way as to contain themselves, by means of folders emptied of all information. At the same time, **Alice Peach's** modular practice exasperates certain formats to the point of recomposing new languages of image display, recalling the module underlying the composition of the gallery spaces. In the room behind, the skylight illuminates **Ornella Cardillo's** puppet theatre, built through architectural subjects always open to movement, like theatres of time that are never fixed, while in the space above, the idea of a miniaturisation of architecture for **Matteo Pizzolante** determines the passage of scale as a methodology for focusing memory.

When crossing the threshold of the exhibition through the gallery's two large windows, one is confronted with disassembled and reassembled tools, stripped of all their original function through artistic practices capable of deconstructing any narrative. These apparatuses have the characteristic of dealing with regimes of visibility, and therefore of never being neutral. The works of the artists in the exhibition are thus revealed in their ability to rethink the properties manifest in the structures examined, thus re-proposing their unexpressed potential.

Indeed, the apparatuses of staging have the capacity to release a potential and to present themselves as the place where contradictions are revealed: they allow us to hear the unspoken and the desired, but also to visualise the not yet manifest, the hidden, the forgotten, or to perceive the invisible, the unwanted, the dormant. These structures are not the form of things, but the principles underlying how things appear to us¹, and thus how a system of relations operates according to a more or less thorough understanding of a given element. The belief is that these manifestations have their own intrinsic simobology, expressed through a series of cross-references, contaminations, exchanges and projections, fictitious or real.

¹ Céline Condorelli, *Support Structures*, Sternberg Press, 2014

Ornella Cardillo (Modena, 1993) lives and works in Venice. She graduated in Visual Arts and Fashion at IUAV (Venice) and in 2023 was a co-director finalist for Biennale College Teatro. In 2022 her work was exhibited at Documenta Stadt in Kassel, while in the same year she won the Bevilacqua La Masa artist residency in Venice. As a multidisciplinary artist, she expresses her practice in the encounter between art and theatre. Her works are conceived as “moving sculptures” that, animated in space, become the protagonists of performances and installations. Her artistic research focuses on the relationship between shape and time, concentrating on the forms of a place understood as the signs, traces and voices of time: like writing, they narrate events. The forms are broken down and recomposed, until sculptural silhouettes are constructed that are understood as the *Habitus* worn by the character in question, conceived as a projection of being and staging of a particular existential condition. “Form” (from the Latin “portamento” and “containment”), showing and having in oneself, and “Logos” (from the Greek “lego”, connecting and putting together) guide the realisation of the characters, representing an archetype.

Ludovico Orombelli (1996) is an Italian artist, working and living between Milan and Lausanne. His practice stresses to the limit the poetic principles underlying Western representation. The artist explores ancient methodologies and processes with a deconstructive attitude, revealing the transitoriness of the languages on which the imagery around him is based. He has recently used pouncing to reproduce and transform into preparatory drawings the backgrounds of renaissance painting. The works reveal a fundamental structure, questioned by the volatility of the pigment that composes it. He is currently attending the master's degree at The École cantonale d'art de Lausanne (ECAL), Switzerland. He took part in art residencies such as Dolomiti Contemporanee, Borca di Cadore, and VIR Viagarini-in-residence, Milan. Recent solo exhibitions include: *In a place I still don't know*, Leipzig (2024); *Una stanza deve avere più di quattro angoli*, Esposizione sud-est, Conversano (2024); *Al di qua*, Provinciale 11, Centro Artistico Alik Cavaliere, Milan (2023). He was invited to art talks such as *Fuoco Incrociato #1* Stefano Arienti - Ludovico Orombelli curated by Giulio Verago, Viagarini, Milan, 2022.

Matteo Pizzolante (Tricase, LE, 1989) lives and works between Milan and Munich. He graduated in Building Engineering in 2012, and then enrolled in the Biennium of Sculpture at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts under the guidance of Vittorio Corsini. He completed his studies in Germany at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Dresden with Wilhelm Mundt and Carsten Nicolai. Pizzolante uses digital images and software as tools to represent and describe space in a broader and more layered way. The starting point of his creative process is often 3D modelling, through which the artist creates unique compositions in which he combines memory and imagination. Through a meticulous digital reconstruction work, he creates a lucid vision that seems to vanish before the eyes of the observer. Matteo Pizzolante's works rehabilitate states of mind and concepts such as slowness and time dilation, in contrast to the speed of everyday life. He has recently participated in: *Questo (non) è un museo* curated by Ramdom, Kora - Centro del Contemporaneo (LE); *Leggere gravità* - Nucre, II Edizione, curated by Arechi Invernizzi, Trullo Rubina, Ceglie Messapica (LE); *Chi ghe pù Nissun!* at Fondazione Elpis, Milan and in collaboration with Ramdom. The solo exhibitions: *Sapeva le forme delle nubi* at Kora, Centro del Contemporaneo (LE), *La linea che ci divide dal domani*, curated by Atto Belloli Ardessi, at FuturDome, Milan. He is a finalist for the FBZ art award 2024, at Forschungs- und Behandlungszentrum für psychische Gesundheit in Bochum, the 23rd Cairo Prize and winner of the residency project promoted by Heimann Stiftung. He is also the winner of the Jaguart Milan Prize, organised by Artissima and the International Vanni Autofocus10 Prize. He participated in the Q-Rated project, Ricerche sensibili, and Panorama both promoted by La Quadriennale, Rome.

Giuseppe Lo Cascio (1997) lives and works between Baucina (Pa) and Venice. He is currently one of the 2023/2024 assignees of the Bevilacqua La Masa ateliers at Palazzo Carminati (VE). His visual research, spanning sculpture, drawing, and installation, focuses on making visible the inner instability of the individual in relation to the precarious structures of memory and knowledge with which they interact daily. Influenced by forms of architecture and design, this exploration expresses the tension of representing and understanding one's condition in the world, continually questioning the integrity of the edifice of knowledge. His work has been exhibited in: *QUASI NIENTE*, duo show with Lorenzo Montinaro, curated by Lorenzo Madaro, CONTEMPORARY CLUSTER, Palazzo Brancaccio, Rome (2024); *Campo Magnetico*, Gli artisti degli atelier 2023/24 curated by Cristina Beltrami, Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Palazzetto Tito, Venice (2024); *HOUSE SELECTION*, No Mark, Venezia (2023); *Cielo Raso #4*, Villa Filippina, Palermo (2022); *Klasse* curated by Verein-Dusseldorf Palermo, Haus der Kunst Cantieri Culturali della Zisa, Palermo (2022); *Young Volcano #4* curated by Daniele Franzella, Rizzuto Gallery, Palermo (2022).

Alice Peach (Bari, 1996) is an English/Italian artist. She graduated in Fine Art at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam in 2020, and later relocated to Berlin between 2020 and 2022. She is currently based in Milan and working in Lausanne, where she is involved in a research project at the art academy ECAL. Her practice moves across painting, sculpture and printing, in a process that uses mostly modular elements, textile patterns and scale modelling materials. Through “craft” meant as both manual labour and deception, Peach meticulously constructs objects and images that investigate the contrast between functionality and ornament, sense and suggestion, rigour and play. Her work was exhibited in Magma Maria (Frankfurt an Main), La Placette (Lausanne), Studiolo Belleville (Paris), Castiglioni Gallery (Milan), Associazione Barriera (Turin), Salotto Studio (Milan), Studio Hannibal (Berlin).

Arnold Braho (1993, lives and works in Milan). He's an independent curator and contributor in various magazines such as Flash Art, L'Essenziale Studio, Exibart, Segno and Artribune. He is co-founder of the curatorial platform Sa.turn, which has been active in publishing and exhibitions since 2020. He is co-founder of the collective Provinciale11. Recent exhibitions include *Theater of Dis-Operations* (Sa.turn & ArtNoble, Milan), *Racconti dalle Terre Piumate*. Pietro Fachini (ArtNoble, Milan); *Não contes à mãe*. Delio Jasse (Zet Gallery, Braga, Portugal); *Fare i conti con il rurale* (Fondazione Arsenale, Iseo). He has participated as assistant curator in several international projects, collaborating with various institutions such as the Center for Italian Modern Art (NYC), 17^a Istanbul Biennale, Villa Arson (Nice, FR), FM Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea (MI), MAXXI Rome. He is assistant curator for *Disobedience Archive*, by Marco Scotini, invited to the 60th edition of the Venice Biennale International Art Exhibition.

Artopia Gallery opened in February 2001 with Marzia Migliora's exhibition *In punta di piedi*, curated by Emanuela De Cecco. The gallery promotes emerging and mid-career Italian and international artists with an extensive program of exhibitions, mostly site-specific and curatorial projects. The intent is to offer a critical and innovative reading of the contemporary through the experimentation of multiple languages and practices that include film, digital media, performance and design. In the fall of 2023, the gallery changed locations, moving to the courtyard of the same building that has housed it for more than two decades. The new space, a former late 19th-century workshop in the heart of Milan, was designed by Studio Martinelli Venezia. Since summer 2022, Artopia has been organizing the festival NUCRÉ, sponsored by the Region of Puglia: a set of contemporary art events aimed at enhancing the cultural and anthropological heritage of the Apulian territory.