

MARTEDÌ CRITICI – HERMANN NITSCH

3 October 2017 at 7.00 pm

Art Forum Würth Capena

Curated by Alberto Dambruoso and Guglielmo Gigliotti

Art Forum Würth Capena is pleased to host the second "Martedì Critici" autumn event at its headquarters just outside Rome. Born from an idea by the art critic Alberto Dambruoso in 2010, this cultural project offers people in the field and contemporary art lovers the chance to meet artists and the main actors on the scene and to become familiar with their work, in an informal rather than academic atmosphere.

Alberto Dambruoso and Guglielmo Gigliotti will talk to Hermann Nitsch (Vienna, 1938), whose works *Secession* (1987) and *Detail of an All-Over Painting of the O. M. Theater* (1984–85) are on display in the group exhibition 'A.E.I.O.U. Da Klimt a Hausner a Wurm – L'arte austriaca nella Collezione Würth' (A.E.I.O.U. From Klimt to Hausner and Wurm – Austrian Art in the Würth Collection) now running at Art Forum Würth Capena.

A leading exponent of the Viennese Actionism movement launched in the mid-1960s, whose members included Günter Brus, Otto Mühl and Rudolf Schwarzkogler, Nitsch founded the Orgien Mysterien Theatre (Theatre of Orgies and Mysteries) between 1957 and 1960. A *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or total work of art that synaesthetically combines drama, painting and music (composed by Nitsch himself) and is experienced by the spectator/actor as a wild debauch that goes on for days and has a cathartic effect similar to that of psychoanalysis.

“The events are not performed as they are in classic theatre, but are happenings. The spectator is made to participate in the event, in order to verify his reality.”

In the 1960s Nitsch also created his first *Schüttbilder*, paintings executed by splattering colour, and sometimes blood, on the canvas: a typical Art Informel technique that accentuates the immediacy of the gesture. Actions like the O.M.T. often involve animals whose bodies are torn apart and innards manipulated, creating a powerful emotional impact. In 1965 this cost the artist two weeks in prison; today it draws criticism and protest from animal-rights activists. The artist has always insisted that the bodies of the animals come from slaughterhouses and they are not killed during the performances, explaining that it is only by experiencing what is done to them and triggering an abreaction, or catharsis, that the primary moral taboos like sex and death can be overcome. Hermann Nitsch has strong connections with Italy. He lived in Asolo in Veneto and in a fisherman's cottage near the archaeological site of Cuma near Naples in 1979. In 2008, his longstanding gallerist Giuseppe Morra inaugurated the Museo Nitsch in Naples (the other museum devoted solely to his work is at Mistelbach in Lower Austria). At Torrita Tiberina, a village not far from Capena, in the Province of Rome, the Fondazione Mario e Maria Pia Serpone has a sculpture park with a chapel where a *Malaktion* (painting action) was performed by the artist. And the CIAC (Centro Italiano Arte Contemporanea) in Foligno recently hosted the exhibition 'Hermann Nitsch – O.M.T. Colore dal rito' ('Hermann Nitsch – O.M.T. Colour from Ritual).

Since the "Martedì Critici" were introduced in 2010, they have welcomed countless artists, including Joseph Kosuth, Jannis Kounellis and Adrian Paci, leading gallerists like Fabio Sargentini and Lia Rumma, and eminent art historians and critics such as Maurizio Calvesi and Lorenza Trucchi. Initially held at the home-studio of their founder Alberto Dambruoso, the critical meetings were then hosted by various cultural institutions in Rome, like the Spanish Academy, the Chiostro del Bramante and the Academy of Fine Arts. They have also taken place in leading Italian contemporary art museums, such as the Maxxi and Macro in Rome, the Museo Pecci in Milan and the Museo Pan in Naples.

<https://imartedicritici.com/>

Art Forum Würth Capena

13.2.2017 – 26.1.2019

Opening times:

Monday – Saturday 10.00 am – 5.00 pm

Closed on Sunday and public holidays

Free admission

The exhibition features a wide-ranging selection of paintings, graphic works and sculptures by over 30 artists, starting with Gustav Klimt, Oskar Kokoschka, Rudolf Ribarz, and Carl Fahringer, moving on to the vast output of 20th-century Austrian art created by exponents like Friedensreich Hundertwasser, Rudolf Hausner, Hermann Nitsch, Arnulf Rainer, Alfred Haberpointner, Alfred Hrdlicka and Peter Pongratz, and concluding with younger artists like Erwin Wurm, Markus Redl and Markus Hofer.

Austrian art is prominently showcased in the Würth Collection, which boasts the largest privately-owned group of works by Austrian artists outside of Austria.

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