



PREE RELEASE

LA NATURA E LA PREDÀ – NATURE AND PREY Colonial histories and cartographies

Curated by **Marco Scotini**

March 19th – May 29th, 2022

On March 18th 2022, Parco Arte Vivente is pleased to present the group exhibition ***Nature and Prey***, that tackles the subject of colonial memory through the works of a young generation of Italian artists: **Irene Coppola** with **Vito Priolo**, **Edoardo Manzoni**, **Daniele Marzorati** and **Alessandra Messali**.

Far from being an innate condition, oblivious to its circumstances, being a prey is a position conferred in relation to other subjects, the object of the predator's deliberate strategy. We can state that something becomes the prey – and, therefore, *hunnable* – due to a process of distinguishing, hierarchisation or exclusion from the accepted orders. In order to trace out a theory of prey, it is necessary to consider both the politics of human and extra-human representation and the ways in which power constructs social identities through repression. With respect to other strategies of conflict, hunting is not a battle between equal partners but requires an original imbalance given the hunter's factual supremacy. Considering our colonial memories today, Italian and otherwise, does not mean dealing only with a forgotten or repressed past: the forms of oppression that we believed we had left behind to the time of slavery and the plantations, resurface in the neo-archaic reconfigurations encouraged by the power of neo-liberalist economic politics.

The word *Prey*, which, in Italian, has the same etymology as the verb *prendere* [to take], is always something that is acquired through violence and capture and is an act that we have legitimised and attributed to nature. Building a theory of prey can be an important tool when tackling the dramatic reality of colonial memory: the four emergent artists invited to take part in the exhibition are not naturalists but the archaeologists of a social history of nature and they investigate by working on the representations of the exotic, of hunting and colonial experiments on plants.

Edoardo Manzoni's hunting scenes, the traps and bird calls reflect how the violence of the images produced in Africa during the colonial period are rendered aesthetically acceptable. The representation of the defeated and slaughtered "beasts", exaggerated in order to render the hunt a heroic enterprise, operates as an exoticizing device for big-game hunting, a metaphor for the subjugation of populations. In turn, **Daniele Marzorati's** project retraces some of the physical signs of the repressed colonial past in Italian territories, photographic research that activates the connections between the regulatory power of official histories and objects that are apparently neutral, observing the links between Fascism, colonialism and racism, making use of the concept of "race" and "racialisation", as expressed by Mellino or, in other words, hierarchisation by means

of the ideology of "race" that invisibly permeates the Italian social structure. *EMILIO SALGARI AND THE TIGER - A Story Written in Far Away Italy, Set in Guwahati 187*, by **Alessandra Messali**, is the result of research carried out by the artist in the Indian state of Assam. The popular author Emilio Salgari (1862-1911) never travelled outside Italy, despite writing more than 200 adventure stories set in "exotic" locations: one of these is the city of Guwahati (in Assam, India, during Guwahati Research Program - Microclima), an area controlled by British colonialists. The project is an experiment in which the differences between the text and the context to be found in Salgari's books are used as tools for reflecting on the logic of cultural representation and on what it means to be represented. Lastly, **Irene Coppola**, presents *Habitat 08°N* (project supported by the Italian Council, Directorate General for Contemporary Creativity, MiC), created by working closely with the indigenous community of Guna Yala (Panama) in collaboration with the architect Vito Priolo: beginning with the local, material culture, a codex of memories is constructed which is able to narrate the history of the territory, date the settlements and map out migrations and movements.

During the public opening of the exhibition, by reservation, the AEF Educational and Training Activities of the PAV proposes to schools and organized groups the workshop "Wunderkammer d'Altrove": a collection of imaginative curiosities, in between true and false. In connection to the research of Nature and Prey, the workshop explores the exercise of imagery of what is far from us and, for this very reason, highly desirable.

As part of the "Workshops with artists" series, on Saturday 14th May Alessandra Messali will lead the public workshop entitled "Tiger vs. Tiger in the jungle of representations".

To take part in the activities, reservation is required: 011 3182235 - lab@parcoartevivente.it

La Natura e la Preda opens PAV's exhibition programme for 2022. This will continue with the solo exhibitions of works by Elena Mazzi and Regina José Galindo.

The exhibition has been created with the support of the Compagnia di San Paolo, the Fondazione CRT, the Regione Piemonte and the City of Turin.

Press Office

Lara Facco P&C

Viale Papiniano 42 – 20123 Milano | T. +39 02 36565133 | E. press@larafacco.com

Lara Facco | M. +39 349 2529989 | lara@larafacco.com

Denise Solenghi | M. +39 333 3086921 | denise@larafacco.com

PAV Parco Arte Vivente

via Giordano Bruno 31, 10134, Torino

www.parcoartevivente.it