

Caterina Silva : Unpowered

Bosse & Baum | Vortic London Collective

29 July - 31 August 2020



Bosse & Baum is pleased to introduce a solo exhibition titled *Unpowered* of new works by Caterina Silva, as part of London Collective on Vortic Collect. The virtual exhibition consists of eight paintings visualised on a computer desktop wallpaper that depicts a mountain view. The paintings belong to the body of work titled *Forms of non-power*, made in 2019. The choice of a neutral Apple desktop image as the exhibition's background is a simple way to highlight the algorithmic nature of the display, through the medium of Vortic Collect and to interrogate reality after the consistent shift toward its extended version, caused by the post-pandemic setting and future scenarios. Currently the Vortic App is being developed and is unable to fully support this project, meaning that some aspects of the works are not high enough in resolution, adding a further layer to the nature of being unpowered.

The virtual exhibition can be seen on Vortic Collect, while another aspect of the project will be translated into an audio-visual format, via Vimeo and Instagram. For this, Caterina Silva asked some curators, artists and friends to submit a short description of the paintings in the exhibition and translated the paintings into bodily movements. The texts have been further re-processed through a vocal assistant while the movements have been translated into a 3D animation and edited into a short film to accompany the online exhibition. Silva intends this translating-operation-piece both as an ode to the algorithm (or a spell to get rid of it) and as part of her ongoing research about openness and powerlessness. While the paintings on show attempt to escape language and definitions, longing for a more ineffable and intuitive dimension of existence and perception, the voices act as paradoxical forces that try to re-establish the lost connection that links words and meanings, language and reality. At the same time the words come from different people and perspectives, opening up the paintings towards multiple interpretations and alluding to the old magic power of language to transform and give shape to reality, in this case through action in the virtual realm.

Caterina Silva explores the links between power and language from silent or pre-linguistic places, in order to elude canonical structures of the production of meaning. She uses painting to probe at the obscure spaces of the mind, those which are impossible to explain in words, but which exist and materialise into matter and then object. She creates open images available to the interpretation of the observer, a consequence of a process of deconstruction of her own internal superstructure carried out through the matter of painting itself and its translation into choreographic experiments and performances. She explores this feeling of powerlessness and discomfort, because it creates an openness towards her surroundings and shifts the artist's attention from herself to a non-self.

Through different painting techniques, Silva registers details of the space in which she works, traces of her daily life as well as fragments of our collective unconscious: news, disasters, uprisings as well as other un-nameable things that might relate to death, chance, love, pain, joy, despair and errors in the system. This vast array of

elements is translated into utopian and meditative spaces in which different painterly attitudes and languages coexist. The works become an accumulation of thoughts, gestures, and actions, which imply performance and controlled chaos. The paintings exhibited as part of *Unpowered* are compositions made using frottage, a system for letting the matter emerge from underneath the canvas, which is un-stretched on the floor. This happens either through scratching chalk over the little protrusions of the floor or naturally through the weight of water poured on the fabric, on top of the folds of the plastic sheets underneath, whereby the canvas retains the shape of these actions. Silva masters randomness and exercises the least power on the image that wants to emerge, obliquely questioning the history of the painting subject and the way meaning is constructed through linguistic limitation. This is the artist's way of investigating the relationship between power and language, and to question the violence of representation from a silent and non-discursive position.

Caterina Silva b. 1983, Rome, Italy. Lives and works in London and Rome. Graduated from The Camberwell College of Art, London in 2002 and the Istituto Europeo di Design, Rome with a BA in Scenography in 2006. Recent solo exhibitions and performances include: *Present Future*, Artissima, Turin (2019); *Diaries Among Diaries*, Fondazione Spinola Banna, Poirino (2019); *Impressioni*, Bosse & Baum, London (2018); *Amor Proprio*, performance, Centrale Montemartini, Rome (2017); *Münster*, Galleria Valentina Bonomo, Rome (2016); *Senza Sistema*, Bosse & Baum, London (2016); *Sacrosanctum*, Oratorio di San mercurio, Palermo (2016); *tbc (august)* (2015), Bosse & Baum, London; *Subject/Object/Abject* (2015), Riccardo Crespi Gallery, Milan; *The Reconfigured Painting* (2015). Group exhibition and performances include: *All Good, All Right*, Galleria Nazionale di Cosenza, Cosenza (2019); *Diari tra Diari (Diaries among diaries)*, Fondazione Spinola Banna, Poirino (2019); *Summer exhibition*, Lunetta 11, Mombarcaro (2019); *Scratching the Present*, Casa Testori, Novate Milanese (2018); *Combat Prize*, winner of painting section, Museo Giovanni Fattori, Livorno (2018); *Finite/Infinite*, curated by Emma Van de Merwe, Everard Read-Circa, Cape Town (2018); *Tunnel*, performance, Passetto del Biscione, Rome (2018); *FourteenArTellarò*, Tellarò (2018); *Festa Franca*, studio of Adelaide Cioni and Fabio Giorgi Alberti, Cannara (2018); *Deposito d'arte italiana presente*, curated by Iliara Bonacossa and Vittoria Martini, Artissima, Turin (2017); *You see me like a ufo*, curated by Marcelle Joseph, Ascot (2017); *ssol/ap*, performance, Galleria Valentina Bonomo, Rome (2017); *A.P.*, performance, ACC, Gwangju (2016); *Anthropocene*, Riccardo Crespi, Milan (2016); *Secret Society of Lovers*, performance, Bosse & Baum, London (2016); *Jolly Joker with Maria Barnas*, Laboratoriumstraat, Amsterdam (2016). Recent residencies include: *Arp*, Cape Town (2018); *NKD*, Dale, Norway (2018); *ACC*, Gwangju, South Korea (2016); *Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten*, Amsterdam (2015); *Cité International des Arts*, Paris (2013). In 2015 Caterina Silva was nominated for the 16th Premio Cairo.