

## PRESS RELEASE

I pag. 1

[dip] contemporary art is delighted to present

### URBAN LANDSCAPES HUMAN CODES

**Opening:**  
wednesday 22.01.2020 h. 18.00 - 20.30

**Visits: 23.01 - 22.02.2020**

A group show with **Geraldo de Barros** (Brazil), **Paolo Canevari** (Italy), **Olga Kisseleva** (France/Russia), **Wang Tong** (China), **Avinash Veeraraghavan** (India)

A selection of works by three generations of artists, spanning four different continents.

Different historical, political and artistic periods. Different social and urban contexts. Through their works, these artists depicts expressions of a visual vocabulary that refers to continuous interconnections between art and society: gathering strong inputs, eager to find a synergy between past and future, oscillating between different contexts. In this different explorations, the landscape, especially the urban one, becomes a metaphor for the incessant metamorphosis of society.



## PRESS RELEASE

I pag. 2

According to The Guardian,  
De Barros was "**one of the most influential Brazilian artists of the 20th century.**"

*"A photograph belongs to the one who makes something out of it, not necessarily to the one who took it."*

Geraldo de Barros

**Geraldo De Barros** (Sao Paulo, 1923 – 1998), was a Brazilian painter, photographer and designer, who also worked in engraving, graphic arts, and industrial design. He was a leader of the concrete art movement in Brazil, cofounding Grupo Ruptura and was known for his trailblazing work in experimental abstract photography and modernism.

Geraldo de Barros began his investigations into photography in the mid-1940s in São Paulo. He built a small photo studio and bought a 1939 Rolleiflex and, in 1949, he joined the Foto Cine Club Bandeirante, which was one of the few forums for the city's photography enthusiasts. Members of the group were interested in pictorial photography and de Barros's explorations of abstraction were met with little interest. That same year, de Barros was invited to create a photo laboratory in the new Museu de Arte de São Paulo, an important gesture toward including photography in contemporary art spaces. De Barros's work from this period is characterized by scraped negatives, and multiple exposures. He met art critic Mario Pedrosa and became interested in Gestalt theory and occupational therapy. Adon Peres writes, "The experience was to prove crucial for Geraldo, opening the way to far-ranging considerations on figure and form in relation to freedom of representation. Geraldo's work, likewise, took on an ethical and human dimension that it was to retain throughout his life." In 1950, the Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP) invited de Barros to exhibit his photographs, and he showed a selection from his Fotoformas series. The exhibition led to a fellowship opportunity to study abroad in Europe. While traveling, he met important artists and theorists including Max Bill, Giorgio Morandi, and Francois Morellet. In 1952, de Barros returned to Brazil, and he became a central figure in São Paulo's Concrete art movement. Although internationally known for his innovations in photography, de Barros actively worked with the medium only during two periods of his life: 1945-1951, and 1996-1998. In 1993, his photographs from the earlier period were shown at the Musée de l'Élysée in Lausanne. This series of work, called the **Fotoformas**, drew from the techniques of engraving and collage. In his later years, after having two debilitating strokes, he was compelled to look again at his old photographs. He made **Sobras**, a new series of photographic work. In a concentrated period of productivity, he rediscovered imagery from the archive of his life. In Portuguese, Sobras translates as 'what remains', 'what is spare', 'things', 'leftovers' or 'scraps' yet these surplus pictures were never discarded completely, instead becoming the raw material for a final exquisite work. In this reconstitution of old photographs, Geraldo de Barros passed on his last gift to us.

Geraldo de Barros's works are included in numerous important collections, such as Chateaubriand Museum of Art, Brazil; Cisneros-Fontanals Art Foundation (CIFO), Miami, FL, USA; Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, New York, NY, USA; Contemporary Art Museum, Grenoble, France; Contemporary Art Museum of São Paulo, MAC-USP, Brazil São Paulo Assis; Curitiba Museum, Parana, Brazil; Elysée Museum, Lausanne, Switzerland; Ludwig Museum, Cologne, Germany; Max Bill Collection, Zürich, Switzerland; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Houston, TX, USA; Museum of Image and Sound, São Paulo, Brazil; Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, NY, USA; and Pinacoteca of the State of São Paulo, Brazil, among others.

## PRESS RELEASE

I pag. 3

**Paolo Canevari** (born in Rome 1963) lives and works in Rome. Canevari is one of the most internationally renowned artists of his generation. Coming from a family of painters and sculptors who worked with an expressive rhetoric based on sacral and military imagery, which included the Roman she-wolf and eagle, helmet and sword. It was his inevitable destiny to become an artist who sought a mobile material and language strove for the anti-monumental. For these reasons, from the start of his creative development, Canevari has been fascinated by the icons which since the war's end have shaped the memory of Italian culture, but the subjects them to an anti-nostalgic process, in which the material of their figuration evokes the crisis and decline of a civilization. Indeed, his work stems from thoughts and reflections on the transient nature of art and on the significance of artistic sculptures in modern society. While wondering on the value and origin of the most intimate aspects of memory, the artist develops his own personal language where symbols, pop culture, historical knowledge and politics are intertwined in a new interpretation of daily life. Canevari uses different media and materials, from sculptures to installations, from drawings to video. Everything fragile is poetic. Drawing is by its nature this: an example of fragility and poetry. The drawing remains a unique sign compared to its sister writing. It is only reproducible visually and cannot be read, recited or transcribed. Canevari has always sought an alternative support to paper, one that would not deny the idea of drawing, in fact one that would make it more unique. The works on glass, the projections and etchings, the works on marble, all stemmed from this idea, of a drawing in another dimension, another material, another life. The artist's urge to place a sign on a material synonymous with sculpture, solidity, immortality, is meant to reflect the fragility of art even in its traditionally strongest element. The black marble surface is the opposite of the sheet of paper with its whiteness, the carved sign does not allow for mistakes, as does graphite. We "remove, not add," as Michelangelo said about sculpture. The sign is only a scratch on the stone that has waited millions of years. Now it lives. The connection with historical movements and the influence they have on younger artists is a natural thing.

Paolo Canevari has participated in numerous museum exhibitions, public commissions and publications throughout Europe, the Americas and Asia. In 2007 he participated at the 52nd Biennial in Venice curated by Robert Storr. His work is collected by major museums throughout the World: Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato; Museum of Modern art MoMA, New York; Foundation Louis Vuitton pour la Creation, Paris; Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami; Macro, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rome; MART Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto; Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg; Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica Calcografia Nazionale, Rome; GNAM Galleria Nazionale di Arte Moderna, Rome; Perna Foundation, Capri; Olnick Spanu Art Program Garrison, New York.

Paolo Canevari's video work "**Bouncing Skull**" shows a boy playing with a dirty ball in front of the ruins of a city. The video was shot in the former Serbian Army Head Quarters in Belgrade, that was bombed in 1999 by the NATO. What seems to be a ball, indeed is a skull. A boy is kicking, catching, rolling, and stamping the skull alone and intensely as if he is haunted by something. The video has been presented at the 52nd Venice Biennale and is part of MoMa collection.

**Olga Kisseleva** (b. 1965 in Saint-Petersburg, lives and works in Paris) studied at the University of California and Columbia University in New York, focusing on video art and multi-media, defending her Ph.D. dissertation on the topic of art&science. After receiving a Fulbright grant in 2000, she became a part of a team of creators working on the development of numerical technologies in the United States. In 1998, Kisseleva's book on art&science was published in France and other countries and she was invited to teach at Sorbonne. Professor Kisseleva is Director of Art&Science International Institute, Head of Art and Medium program and a member of the High Scientific Committee of Sorbonne.

Olga Kisseleva works mainly in installation, science art and media art. Her work employs various media, including video, immersive virtual reality, the Web, wireless technology, performance, large-scale art installations and interactive exhibitions.

Olga Kisseleva is an internationally renowned artist. Her main exhibitions include: Modern Art Museum (Paris, France), KIASMA (Helsinki, Finland), Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia (Madrid, Spain) La Fondation Cartier for contemporary art (Paris, France), Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris, France), Guggenheim Museum (Bilbao, Spain), Art Institute (Chicago, USA), National Centre for Contemporary Art (Moscow), Louvre Museum (Paris), as well as Dakar Biennale (2002), Tirana Biennale (2003), Moscow Biennale (2011), Istanbul Biennial (2013), Berlin Biennale (2014), Venice Biennale (2015), Echigo Tsumari Triennale (2018).

Olga Kisseleva works are a part of 25 most important museum's collections, such as Centre Pompidou (Paris, France), Louis Vuitton Foundation (Paris, France), ZKM (Karlsruhe, Germany) Moscow museum of modern art (Moscow, Russia), National Center For Contemporary Art (Moscow, Russia), Getty Centre (Los Angeles, CA), MOMA (New York, USA), among many others.

***Data Emergency*** (or ***Camouflage Urbain***) is a 2017 work by Olga Kisseleva, investigating the relationships between art and politics. The issue in "Data Emergency" is the access, we must know their strategies to be able to live in our way, to do not be part of the crowd walking in the same path, but understanding our own particularities and subjectivities which are the essence of human being. The data is comprehended by what we have to claim for, our rights, our perception and our desires. The data is emergent because we have to find a way to respond to oppression. "Data emergency" situation could be the rescue of our values to preserve our integrity.

***Urban DataScape*** is an interactive multimedia installation to immerse yourself in the heart of the Parisian climate issues. Designed for the Banks of the Seine, this work inaugurates the launch ArtCOP21, a cultural event on climate change that took place throughout the year 2015 until the COP21. The artist Olga Kisseleva has devised Urban DataScape to encourage walkers to connect to their urban environment and reveal their collective dimension and systemic issues related to climate. It consists of an installation QRCode, which once flashed offers walkers the opportunity to travel in an enriched digital landscape and connected to historical, economic, political, cultural, social and climate related in world and in their immediate environment. A critical look at the use of technology, Urban DataScape also offers a non-market reappropriation of the QR-code to encourage citizen involvement and participation of all the great climate challenge through the digital potential.

**Wang Tong** (b. 1967 in Jilin, China, lives and works in Beijing), chief photography editor of Chinese National Geography magazine as well as one of China's most talented photographers, explores photography with the accuracy of a philologist, while continuously expanding the scope of a genre which, for him, is a meta-language for investigating the complex liaison between the microcosm and the macrocosm, the real and the ideal, the historical and the daily. He has been active in the field of photography since the early 1990s when he started to create some of the most challenging and visually-compelling bodies of work ever produced in China.

As an author of documentary images rooted in the keen observation of past history and contemporary reality as well as the tension between strong narrative elements, Wang Tong has devoted his career to portraying the abrupt changes that his mother country has undergone. He documents the construction and incessant renegotiation of China's identity in both the individual and collective senses. His photographic work is the prism through which we can view the various layers of Chinese history that are inevitably intertwined with the artist's personal experience. In Wang's oeuvre, these elements overlap with thrilling results, and each photograph reflects a specific moment in his mental and geographical topography. The ongoing project *Forging Cities*, example of historical accuracy and the artist's commitment to long-term projects. The landscape, especially the urban one, becomes a metaphor not just for the incessant metamorphosis of Chinese society, but for the Chinese condition. Desires, hopes, fears, and a sense of transiency are all rooted in and reflected by this landscape.

The series *Forging Cities* epitomizes this core aspect of Wang's work. Indeed, *Forging Cities* is an encyclopedic project on which the artist has been working for more than a decade, an open series focusing on the hundreds of cities across China that he has visited and captured in his insatiable lens. Wang has assembled an urban Wunderkammer of expanding cities suspended between reality and fantasy, desire and fulfillment. Amusement parks under construction, a bridge by a lake enveloped in mist, concrete walls that unquestionably divide the rural from the urban, towering skyscrapers, iconic vistas recognized even by casual viewers, and anonymous urban corners are just a few of the myriad subjects incorporated into this massive project.

These Chinese cities are captured in black and white photos that are often intentionally blurry, presenting the urban world as a collage, constantly unfinished and challenged by new visions.

For its detailed and accurate approach to both the conceptual and the technical aspects related to photography, Wang Tong's work has been extensively exhibited throughout China, as well as in Japan and Europe. It is also present in major Asian art collections. Wang Tong's work has been presented in solo and groups shows organized at: Galleria Carla Sozzani, 10 Corso Como, Milan (2005); Beijing Tokyo Art Projects, Beijing and Tokyo (2006); Fotografie Noorderlicht, Groningen (2008); Alessandria Video and Photography Biennale, Alessandria (2011); Ofoto Gallery, Shanghai (2012); Stavanger Museum, Stavanger, Norway (2014); Format International Photography Festival, Derby, UK (2015), among others.

## PRESS RELEASE

I pag. 6

**Avinash Veeraraghavan** (b. in Chennai in 1975, he currently lives and works in Bangalore) draws on his interest in the visual language of popular culture and digital imaging to create graphic books, layered prints, and multichannel video installations. His interest in visuals extends to images of all kinds, from photographs, patterns in print and textiles, wallpaper patterns, wrapping paper to motifs taken from different cultures. Veeraraghavan has been involved with the practice of image construction through meticulously manipulated digital images that are skilfully layered and juxtaposed to open up new possibilities of meaning. The complex visual collages reflect a deep-rooted and often manic exploration of the structure of emotions and the interstices of the mind.

Avinash Veeraraghavan's recent solo presentations include 1024 Names, GALLERYYSKE, Bangalore (2016), We do not see things the way they are, we see things the way we are at GALLERYYSKE, New Delhi (2014), an exhibition at the Tilton Gallery, New York (2013), Crazy Jane and Jack the journey man at Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna (2011) and Toy Story, GALLERYYSKE, Bangalore (2009). His work has featured in the Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2016 edition, and in the traveling exhibition Indian Highway which was presented at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2012), Herning Museum of Contemporary Art, Denmark (2010) and Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo (2009). His group exhibitions include the Prague Biennale (2011), Urban Manners 2, curated by Adelina Von Furstenberg, Art for The World at SESC Pompeia, Sao Paulo (2010) and Still Moving Image, curated by Deeksha Nath at Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi (2008). In 2009, Veeraraghavan was the recipient of the Illy Sustain Art Prize awarded in Madrid.

*"I Love My India"* was commissioned as a book by Tara Publishing, Chennai, in 2001. The book is a story of a generic Indian city, whose parts are mixed and matched from various cities and towns across India. The book is divided into three chapters: Billboard city, weak architecture and remote city (television and cinema), as every Indian city necessarily contains these three registers. With a healthy dose of popular culture, the collages in the book are that of a poetic and ironic insider decoding various fascinating and often contradictory facets of life in the generic Indian city.

## PRESS RELEASE

I pag. 7

### [dip] contemporary art

[dip] is a contemporary art gallery located in Lugano, opened by Michela Negrini. Representing a range of international artists, [dip] aims at being a stimulating platform for exploring new developments in international contemporary art, across a range of practices and media, building a bridge between art and society, raising public attention on the issues that inspire and challenge our society.



Avinash Veeraraghavan  
From the series, *I love my India*

### [dip] contemporary art

via dufour 1  
6900 lugano (CH)  
www.dipcontemporaryart.com  
info@dipcontemporaryart.com  
tel +41 091 921 17 17  
mob +41 079 173 29 54

#### Opening hours:

Monday: closed (or by appointment)  
Tuesday/Friday: 14.00 - 18.30  
Saturday/Sunday and mornings:  
appointment only



Paolo Canevari  
*Bouncing skull*, 2007