

January 6
February 17, 2018Opening
Saturday, January 6
from 11 am to 9 pm

Salvatore Arancio

Piero Gilardi

Abraham Poincheval

Rock Garden

Farewell to “categories”: here domains and kingdoms intermingle and converge giving rise to hybrid forms at once disturbing yet attractive, at the crossroads of the natural and the artificial, of what is human and what is not, on the frontiers of science and esotericism. We have here three artists united by a certain natural inclination towards the notion of otherness as well as an holistic approach to the world, made up of infinite networks of interdependence between beings and objects.

Firstly we have Piero Gilardi one of the founding members of the Arte Povera movement. In his oeuvre, there is no return to a supposedly crude and savage life but on the contrary he invents an artificial form of nature already imbued with culture. Such is the case with his well-known imitations of extracts of nature made from painted polyurethane foam such as the installation *Poiesis* (2004) with its bowed trees, as well as his drawings of bucolic landscapes, which might well have been steeped in hallucinogenic substances. If the collusion between rusticity and industry seems a little toxic and even catastrophic to the spectator, things are a little more ambiguous for the artist, an adept of post-humanist thought; that concerning the hybridization of all phenomena whether natural, human, animal or technological. This kind of “systemic vision of life ¹” seems also to innervate Salvatore Arancio’s practice, which can be situated somewhere between science, mythology and mysticism. At least that’s what his ceramic sculptures inspired by caves of giant crystals in Mexico or the geological phenomenon of trees covered by lava on the Hawaiian islands in the 17th century, suggest. Coated with pastel and fluorescent colored enamel, their ambiguous shapes evoke in turn stalagmites, phallic totems and strange mushrooms in a kind of fusion of elements and transmutation of materials more often associated with alchemy.

This technique of bringing together seemingly contradictory elements is not unrelated to Abraham Poincheval’s performances. This can for example be observed in *Gyrovague, le voyage invisible* (2001), for which the artist pushed a metallic cylinder 300 kilometers. The cylinder acted both as a shelter and a camera obscura that he used to record the landscapes he passed through as if on “an epic cosmic journey in a kind of extraterrestrial vehicle.²” On a different level, the artist has also experienced travel “at the speed of mineral³” enclosed within a limestone rock hollowed out in the shape of his body (*Pierre*, 2017), or sitting for a week in a hole with a diameter of 60 cm, whose entrance was blocked by a stone (*604800s*, 2012). These were all ways of pushing back his physical and mental limits, while putting oneself to the test of enduring life under inhuman conditions.

Sarah Ihler-Meyer
Translation Chris Atkinson

1 Talk between Piero Gilardi, Stéphane Corréard and Timothée Chaillou, Particules n°26, October-December 2009.

2 Thomas Schlessler, « Abraham Poincheval, l’Humanité en suspens », Abraham Poincheval, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2017.

3 Talk between Abraham Poincheval and Adélaïde Blanc, Abraham Poincheval, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2017.



"Rock Garden", Semiose galerie, Paris
06.01 > 17.02.2018
Courtesy Semiose galerie, Paris
Photo : A. Mole



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