



FONDAZIONE  
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Comunicato stampa



## Donne Donne Donne

curated by Francesca Pasini

Opening Saturday 26 November 2011

performance 18.30 THE MAIDS by Jean Genet, directed by Emanuela Rolla

opening 19.45 of the exhibition Donne Donne Donne

From 26 November 2011 to 18 March 2012

Thursday-Sunday, 15.00-19.00

DONNE DONNE DONNE is the title of the new exhibition at Fondazione Pier Luigi & Natalina Remotti of Camogli (Genoa), including works by about thirty artists from the Collection. For this show the director Francesca Pasini has decided to trigger a dialogue between the language of visual art and that of theater, with the performance of *The Maids* by Jean Genet, directed by Emanuela Rolla, who is also in the cast, together with Margherita Remotti and Gabriella Fossati.

The performance, a world premiere for this occasion, takes place at 18.30, followed by the opening of the exhibition. At that moment, the very bright lights of the inscription NOT FOR YOU are turned on, a sculpture by **Monica Bonvicini**, made in 2006. This work has been shown in other versions in many international museums, including the Museion of Bolzano in 2007, but this is the first showing of this particular version. The choice of the works from the Remotti collection combines the theme of the body with interpretations of the viewpoints of women and the role they have attained in the history of contemporary art. The show offers a forceful perspective on female identity, raising issues that are particularly timely today, in a time in which the body is used as a status symbol of political, economic and media power.

Women artists have foreseen, understood and narrated this dynamic in many forms: from the leading figure of Body Art, **Gina Pane**, with her *Cicatrices de l'action (le corps pressenti, Pysché)* (1974-75), to **Marina Abramovic's** *Lips of Thomas*, also a photograph from a performance, done from 1975 to 1997, in which the artist cuts a five-pointed star on her stomach with a razor blade. **Nan Goldin** shows us the portrait of a woman in an erotic, brazen pose, boldly confronting the specter and dream of prostitution, while **Vanessa Beecroft** is included with an image from 1997 of one of her first performances, when she created the mobile physiognomy of her living sculptures by choosing her female friends or new acquaintances as the models. **Shirin Neshat**, with one of her **Women of Allah** (1996), photographs herself completely veiled as she holds the hand of her nude son, on which she has traced the typical decorations of Islamic imagery. **Elizabeth Aro**, in a very ironic video dated 1998, shows a nude girl who imagines how she will wear on her own wedding gown. The young and highly acclaimed **Nathalie Djurberg**, with her video animation *The Secret Handshake* (2006), lets us enter an irreverent sexual encounter between an adult man and a young girl. **Marjetica Potrc** represents, in a colored drawing, *The Great City of Medellin* (2007), like a tree with many roots whose foliage takes the form of a dancing nude woman.

Images and issues of sexual encounter that find their way onto front pages today, which these women artists have channeled into art not to moralize or to judge, but to point to the complexity of life, whose origin is always the a matter of gender.

These viewpoints are very different from those of the conciliated love of romanticism, or the icons of history in which the woman was always an allegorical transfiguration. A profound change has taken place that has widened culture and sentiments, spreading



and continuing to produce figures that narrate homes, cities, objects, life.

The exhibition also includes works by **Marzia Migliora, Dadamaino, Paola Pivi, Sylvie Fleury, Katharina Fritsch, Florence Henri, Candida Höfer, Hannah Starkey, Laurie Simmons, Christine Erhard, Janieta Eyre, Chantal Joffe, Dacia Manto, Tracey Emin, Annette Messenger, Anna Gaskell, Raffaella Nappo, Paola Mattioli, Ann Lislegaard, Moira Ricci, Silvia Levenson, Liliana Porter, Traslochi Emotivi.**

**Kimsooja** will wrap the walls of the ground level with the sequence of large photographs of Teatro La Fenice in Venice, where in 2006 she presented the video *To Breathe. Invisible Mirror/Invisible Needle*, accompanied by the sound of her breathing in an increasingly syncopated rhythm, while images of the color spectrum moved across the firewall of the theater.

*Not for you* by **Monica Bonvicini** and *To Breathe* by **Kimsooja** will interact with the sets of *The Maids*, the first with the warning about independence that metaphorically emerges from Genet's text, the second by evoking a real theater.

#### THE MAIDS by Jean Genet (LE SERVE)

Directed by Emanuela Rolla, with Emanuela Rolla (Claire), Margherita Remotti (Solange), Gabriella Fossati (Madame), produced by Performer-Espressione Applicata. World premiere.

*The Maids* is considered one of the masterpieces of Jean Genet, a perfect theatrical machine in which the game of theater in theater is revealed to expose the falsehood of the stage. Hatred of their mistress is no longer the pretext of their malaise. Elated, visionary, paranoid, the maids are trapped in a world where, victims of themselves, they twist and struggle: a world where the only way out is death.

Claire and Solange have a love-hate relationship with their mistress, and when Madame is away the two of them – already old at heart, perhaps, and grim – act out their own private, obsessive theater, like perverse little girls, “playing Madame”. They take turns wearing her clothes, imitating her. The end of the performance would be murder, but the two sisters never manage to complete the ritual, because time always runs out first. Fiction and reality overlap in their schizophrenic minds, and the attempt at murder takes concrete form in a poisoned cup of herb tea that Madame, distracted, fails to drink. Instead it is Claire, increasingly mired in the duplicity of her life, who drinks the cup offered to her by her murderous sister.

Genet based *Les Bonnes* (1947), to some extent, on the case of the Papin sisters, two housemaids who killed their mistress and her daughter in the 1930s.

The play focuses on three female characters with precise social connotations and backgrounds, and Genet makes very acute, lucid observations regarding women and love. The ritual of Solange and Claire, opening the first scene, leads to a surprise for the audience, because at first they are led to believe that Claire is Madame. Apart from this coup de théâtre, in the rest of the play the meta-theater dissolves into more traditional, though no less disturbing, hints at the fantasies of both characters or scenes that have taken place in the past (strangling attempts, fantasies about the milkman, the drafting of threatening letters, avid readings of crime news, etc).

*Les Bonnes*, rather than a play that investigates its own making and that of theater in general, is a work that toys with enactment, making it explicit, displaying it, seeking authenticity precisely through its posturing. Certain props indicated in the original text (the alarm clock that sets the limit of the ritual prior to Madame's return, the telephone with which Monsieur communicates his release from prison) appear on the stage, amplifying the symbolic sense of theater (where gestures and objects are “mimed” and are never real). The entrance of Madame is replaced by video projections. In this production Madame is elderly, a woman of class but decidedly of old age as well. This choice of the director underlines the idea that the condition of servitude is first of all a matter of inner character.



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#### Press preview

26 November 2011 | 17.45

#### Performance of The Maids

26 November 2011 | 18.30 limited seating

#### Opening of exhibition

26 November 2011 | 19.30

#### On view

26 November 2011 - 18 March 2012

#### Hours

Thursday-Sunday, 15.00-19.00  
or by appointment  
Free of charge

