



MILAN  
FROM JANUARY 21 TO FEBRUARY 27, 2010  
JEROME ZODO CONTEMPORARY  
PRESENTS THE EXHIBITION  
(EX)COMMUNICATE

An innovative new space in Via Lambro is being inaugurated with a group exhibition of international artists that includes Simmons & Burke, Terry Chatkupt, Zackary Drucker, Ben Grasso, Tigran Khachatryan, Simon Senn, Andrew Schoultz, Federico Solmi, and Bertold Stallmach.

On Thursday, January 21 in Milan, by the old city walls of Porta Venezia (Via Lambro, at the corner of Via Melzo), an innovative new gallery space, JEROME ZODO CONTEMPORARY, will be opening its doors.

The inaugural event, (EX)COMMUNICATE, is an exhibition that will run until February 27, 2010, presenting a group of international artists that includes Simmons & Burke, Terry Chatkupt, Zackary Drucker, Ben Grasso, Tigran Khachatryan, Simon Senn, Andrew Schoultz, Federico Solmi, and Bertold Stallmach. The vernissage will feature a performance by Zackary Drucker.

For this project, curator **Jerome Zodo** selected artists who share the gallery's philosophy of giving a key role back to the viewer; it offers a preview of future programming at **Jerome Zodo Contemporary**, which in the months ahead will be featuring, in turn, each of the artists who are taking part in this initiative.

As Jerome Zodo states, "The importance of the art audience is at risk of being obscured, due to the media's aggressive, arrogant attitude towards art. It has become quite clear that what the mass media tend to communicate is, above all, their own image, at the expense of content, and any *value* that comes into contact with them is swallowed up and dumbed down through the mechanism of self-referentiality".

Each of these artists points viewers down a path of discovery that will help them build their own perception of reality, fashion their own ideas about its content. Though they often employ the mechanisms commonly found in everyday mass communication, the invited artists do not place the latter at the center of the project, but rather take advantage of its dynamics, shifting attention directly beyond the cognitive process.

One of the works that best introduces the spirit of the show is *L'Hôtel des Sapins* by **Simon Senn**, a video in which three young men and three young women, all naked, carrying video cameras, and with numbers drawn on their bodies, move through a neutral space. The viewer interacts with the scene by using a remote control: the buttons correspond to the numbers painted on the figures, and by changing channel, one can switch between their points of view.

Also very interesting is **Terry Chatkupt's** video *Untitled (Main Street)*, a sequence of images, without commentary, of closed, bankrupt, abandoned shops.

*The Inability to Be Looked at and the Horror of Nothing to See* is the title of a series of photographs by **Zackary Drucker**, documenting a performance piece in which the artist, blindfolded, scantily clad and stretched out on a massage table, asks the audience to pluck hair from her body with tweezers.

An ironic, economical approach to the themes of the exhibition can be found in the work of **Ben Grasso**. The originality of his paintings springs from a short-circuit in the current of perception. His catastrophic images of explosions, fires, and floods seem to come straight off the TV screen or the covers of international magazines, but looking closely, one sees that the blasts are completely imaginary and impossible, often accompanied by cartoon-like elements.

**Tigran Khachatryan's** work will be represented by the video *Nachalo (The Beginning)*. This artist reinterprets cinematic classics, reconstructing them with a collage of historic footage, fragments of other films, and above all, scenes shot in an "indecently" amateur style. The work cited in this video is, of course, *Nachalo* by Artavazd Peleshyan, a short film dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution.

The very young Swiss artist **Bertold Stallmach** will be presenting a site-specific project whose protagonists are a colony of ants. A plate hangs in the air, at the center of it their microcosm, a small glass globe housing the queen. Four channels connect the central globe with four hollow forms, also made of transparent glass, shaped like large ants in the classic pose of meditation. The glass structure is filled with a special transparent gel that lets the insects live as if they were in the ground, so that visitors can enjoy the spectacle of collective intelligence.

There will also be two large pieces by **Andrew Schoultz**, one on paper and one on a panel, that reflect his attitude towards the precarious nature of artistic communication. Schoultz is influenced by the world of street art: the graffiti, murals, and stickers that are

an everyday sight on the walls of the city. His themes are daily life, political diatribes, and social organization, but his work also investigates man and nature, through the obsessive use of imagery from medieval painting.

The work of Californian artists **Simmons & Burke** triggers an immediate responsiveness in the visitor and an uncontrollable urge to participate. At first glance, they look like enormous pop altarpieces where a vast number of images have been patiently and painstakingly collected, summing up every aspect of reality. A sort of Flemish painting made with cutting-edge digital techniques, it is rounded out by audio, a series of sounds transmitted in random sequence.

A speech part deserve the work of **Federico Solmi**, an Italian born artist who currently lives and works in New York since 1999, and awarded last year by the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation's fellowship for Audio and Video category. His interest in the themes of the show isn't independent from a foregoing friendship a reciprocal admire with Jerome Zodo. Federico is a cultured debunker, an artist that say his opinion on the reality and the false myths trough a wild-satiric language..

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue with texts by **Irina Zucca Alessandrelli** and **Geraldine Zodo**.

**Jerome Zodo Contemporary** is opening its new space in one of the most vibrant and rapidly evolving areas of Milan. The design was entrusted to the A++ architectural firm in Milan ([www.a2plus.it](http://www.a2plus.it)), which converted the former Artdecò café into an art gallery.

But it is a completely new and unconventional kind of gallery, conceived as a different kind of exhibition space; not merely a background for the artwork, but an active element that interacts with the content, creating a dialogue and communion with the work on display to offer a unique artistic experience.

In the words of architect Paolo Colombo, "the ceiling becomes a magnetic space: descending from it are glass cubes that delineate a new exhibit plane among the old iron columns. Attention is shifted upward to where the cubes, like geometric nests, create an almost organic environment of sharp lines and transparent layers. The floor takes on a neutral function, as a simple area of passage. This way, the artist's message is no longer trapped within the confines of the work, but merges with the space around it, enveloping the viewer".

Milan, December 2009

#### **(Ex)communicate**

January 21 - February 27, 2010

**Milan, Jerome Zodo Contemporary** (Via Lambro 7, at the corner of Via Melzo)

**Opening hours:** Tuesday to Saturday, 10 AM to 7 PM, closed Sunday and Monday.

**Free admission**

**For more information:** tel. 02.20241935; fax 02.20244861; [info@jerome-zodo.com](mailto:info@jerome-zodo.com)

**Website:** [www.jerome-zodo.com](http://www.jerome-zodo.com)

**Inaugural vernissage: Thursday, January 21, 6 PM**

**Performance by Zackary Drucker: Thursday, January 21, 8PM**

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