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Review of

ARTISSIMA. Turin, Italy. 4-6 November, 2022.

Every year in the fall, the city of Turin, Italy, celebrates art week. Artissima is the most famous and the most important contemporary art fair in Italy. Since 1994, the fair has attracted hundreds of galleries from all over the world, which show the works of their artists. In 2022, for its 29th edition, 174 galleries from 28 different countries with almost 1500 artworks participated in the art fair. Artissima is divided into seven sections, each of which explores a different subject.

The Main Section brings together renowned galleries and artists from the international art world to offer the highest quality art. Monologue/Dialogue presents emerging galleries applying with either a monographic booth or with a collaborative work by two artists. New Entries, as the name suggests, is reserved for emerging galleries that have been open for less than five years and are participating in Artissima for the first time. Art Spaces & Editions is a special section reserved for galleries and non-profit spaces. Present Future, curated by Saim Demircan and Maurin Dietrich, showcases emerging artists, preferably less than 40 years old, to show new talents of the contemporary art scene. Back to the Future presents solo projects on great pioneers of contemporary art. This section

gathers artworks created from 1960 to the present and aims to bring international artists who have played a fundamental role in contemporary art back into the limelight. Anna Gritz and Balthazar Lovay curate this section. Finally, the last section, curated by Irina Zucca Alessandrelli, is Drawings. This is the only section among all art fairs in Italy dedicated to this ancient medium.



Figure 1
Artissima 2022, Photo credit: Perottino - Piva - Peirone / Artissima

Apart from the main sections mentioned above, you can walk through other parts of the art fair that explore different themes that are explained in an audio guide available only, unfortunately, in Italian. Following the main theme of the 2022 edition, “transformative experience,” the sections

in Artissima raise issues such as discrimination, gender diversity, freedom of expression, and exploitation. The American philosopher L. A. Paul theorized transformative experience in 2014, a concept which debates the importance of this kind of experience in our lives. According to Paul's theory, the most important things that happen during our existence unexpectedly change our way of thinking and being. It doesn't matter if they are conscious decisions, like getting married and starting a family, or unintentional situations, such as distress; both transform us into different human beings (2014). This experience could cause us to question things that we were sure of. As a result, the uncertainty could frighten us. This very moment of shock is the turning point towards something new, unknown, scary, but new. For this reason, opening up to something different can be potentially beneficial in the long term. L. A. Paul wants to make us think about the importance of moving our focus from the fear of changing to the value of changing, to consider the importance of never being static, to contemplate the value of being vulnerable, and to understand the best of every alteration.

Amid global crises, pandemics, and war, it is essential to meditate on things that enable us to face the problems and resolve them effectively. It is not about a passive acceptance of the flow of events, but about conscious participation, which requires realizing what it is about to face these events without undergoing them or letting them dominate us. This is an uncomfortable, difficult, and courageous stance, one that it is important to reaffirm now as never before. In our small way, immersing yourself in something like an art fair or an exhibition can make a difference, as an encounter

with art can be a transformative experience. We enter an unknown world when we engage with artworks that are mostly incomprehensible without the artist's explanation.



Figure 2
Artissima 2022, Photo credit: Perottino - Piva - Peirone / Artissima

We can have a double experience of confrontation with the work of art. The first is purely instinctive and concerns what an art piece, an installation, or a performance communicates to the viewer without them knowing the artwork's meaning. This lack of knowledge leads our brains to make assumptions based on the pure sensations that art transmits to us. The second experience comes after the artist's revelation, based on which we can rationally compare what we initially felt with the author's explanation of the meaning of their work, placing the two readings in a continuous dialogue. This approach extends a welcoming invitation to broaden our minds, urging us to release our attachment to initial perceptions and embrace the inherent fluidity of meaning within a work of art.

Or not to consider it a mistake, but just a different viewpoint that enriches our perception of a virtuous circle.

Because there are too many works in Artissima to talk about in this short review, I decided to mention just the winning artists and their prizes from this edition of the fair:

- Peng Zuqiang, Antenna Space gallery, Shanghai, illy Present Future Prize.
- Nohemí Pérez, mor charpentier gallery, Parigi and Bogotà, FPT For Sustainable Art Award.
- Teresa Giannico, Viasaterna gallery, Milano, Vanni Occhiali #artistroom Prize.
- Kate Newby, Art: Concept gallery, Parigi, Ettore e Ines Fico Prize.
- Oroma Elewa, In Situ gallery - Fabienne Leclerc, Parigi, Tosetti Value award for photography.
- Vasilis Papageorgiou, UNA gallery, Piacenza, Matteo Viglietta Award.
- Anna Perach, ADA gallery, Roma, Carol Rama Award.
- Dala Nasser, Deborah Shamoni gallery, Monaco, winner of the first edition of Isola Sicilia 2022.
- Alex Ayed e Nona Inescu, ZERO... gallery, Milano e Spazio A gallery, Pistoia, ex aequo winners of the second edition of “ad occhi chiusi ...”

Although Artissima is the most important event, it is only one of the many artistic events in Turin at this time of the year. On the art fair’s website, there is a full agenda of events that one can visit around the city. Therefore, for every aspect that has not been possible to explain here, as well as to

view the artworks with the relative comments, I recommend taking a virtual tour at <https://www.artissima.art>.



Figure 3
Artissima 2022, Photo credit: Perottino - Piva - Peirone / Artissima

References

- Artissima. Accessed on December 2, 2022. <https://www.artissima.art/en/>.
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