

## **DEMONS IN A LINE**

*Of Drawing and Other Demons*

Curated by Alessandro Romanini

Opening:  
20.06.2019 at 7pm

21.06 – 31.07.2019

Prometeogallery di Ida Pisani  
Via G. Ventura 6, Milano

Artists in exhibition:

Valerio Adami, Maria José Arjona, Balthus, Filippo Berta, Giuseppe Buzzotta, Carlo Carrà, Fabrizio Cotognini, Regina José Galindo, Alberto Garutti, Maria Lai, Sol Lewitt, Osvaldo Licini, Anibal Lopez (A1 - 53176), Ruben Montini, Dim Sampaio, Mario Santizo, Wael Shawky, Karan Shrestha, Santiago Sierra, Giuseppe Stampone, Driant Zeneli

This exhibition showcases the work of 21 contemporary artists, all gathered in the name of a common line, that of drawing intended in its various expressive, symbolic and ritual meanings. The works on show are a witness to how drawing has represented the way forward in terms of research and experimentation throughout the twentieth century, despite its aura of being an “antique” medium. It remains as such in the twenty-first century.

Already understood as a way to substitute reality in the legend narrated by Plinio the Elder, drawing and the image have been a bridge that united Jewish and Muslim cultures with the Byzantine Iconoclasts, British Puritans, and French and Maoist Revolutionaries in the condemnation of visual culture.

Drawing is a mental act, as demonstrated by the artists of the present exhibition and as claimed by Leonardo and Vasari. It can also be understood through the words of Federico Zuccari: “Philosophising is metaphorically drawing”, or it can be seen as the “universal measure” unifying all things, intended by Raphael Mengs in the eighteenth century.

It is precisely upon the power of drawing to bring together all the artistic disciplines linked to it, upon its symbolical and subversive value, and upon its tautological nature able to describe its own making and realisation that the present exhibition is structured.

These artists, of different technical training and geo-cultural and expressive origin, rely on drawing to mentally structure the processes which are then translated graphically. These float from the minimalistic echoes of the relationship between sign and space in conversation with Sol Lewitt’s architecture, to the literary and mythological ones of Adami, Balthus and Cotognini, to reach the political and quasi-sci-fi reflections of Driant Zenel (who recently participated in the opening of the Albanian Pavilion of the Venice Biennale). They also pass through the lead-incised poetry of Licini, the performative pre-visualisation of Regina Galindo’s pencil (which also appeared at the last Documenta), the installation-based one by Arjona and that of Maria Lai, which focuses on ethnography and identity. We should

not forget the graphic elaboration of Montini and Lopez, situated among body, symbol and ritual, as well as the dynamic processes that constitute Santizo's drawings in his animated illustrations.

The double intellectual and structuring value of drawing is perfectly illustrated by the works presented by Giuseppe Buzzotta, Brazilian artist Sampaio and Nepalese artist Shrestha. The ethical and subversive value given to the act of drawing, as the ultimate action for the fight for the subjectivity of use and creation, acts as a way to further connect the artists in this exhibition. Drawing is thus contrasting the never-ending rain of images coming from mass media, emptied of their expressive force, and based on a unified and numbing vision.

The exhibition offers an original and diverse itinerary to discover the various uses of this expressive medium in contemporary art, despite it being considered obsolete oftentimes. Drawing finds a new fame on an international scale thanks to these contemporary artists.