

## JCU AND CONTEMPORARY ART

*John Cabot University's Department of Art History and Studio Art is pleased to present four contemporary art exhibitions curated by students of the course 'Curating Museums and Galleries' taught by Professor Ilaria Gianni.*

*During the semester the students had the chance to learn the foundations of contemporary museum studies, study the brief history of curating, and be confronted with the contemporary art scene in Rome. The course's challenge was to put theory into practice and work on a real show. The students developed a reasoned exhibition proposal in dialogue with Rome-based artists, and came face to face with curatorial practicalities.*

*Four different elaborate group shows conceived, initiated and presented by four groups of students will develop articulate exhibition projects, showcasing a variety of interesting emergent contemporary art practices and generating innovative curatorial discourses.*

*'Curating Museums and Galleries' desires to thank the online gallery Asa Nisi Masa ([www.anmgallery.com](http://www.anmgallery.com)) for its collaboration and precious support of the project.*

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## FROM HEAD TO TOE

**Elena Bellantoni, Tomaso de Luca, Chiara Mu, Paolo Tamburella**

Curated by Giulia Carletti, Kristina Darazs, Francesca Gallo, Giovanna de Giglio

**Opening Sunday, April 13 | 5.00 – 10.00 pm**

One day exhibition

Lungotevere Fitness gym

Lungotevere degli Artigiani, 20, Rome

*From Head to Toe* is a group show focusing on the idea of human limits and potentials. We do not have control of many things happening to us nor on our possessions, but in terms of body we are fully able to control our physiques. They represent a vital force and a mental pleasure, and we need to push them beyond their physical boundaries, to understand our existence and to perceive our intimate essence. How, thus, could we relate ourselves to the cult of the body, when it becomes the cult of the mirror? The self-relationship turns problematic when associated exclusively with the matter, instead of with the spirit and mind. But is it then deeper or shallower?

The Gym, a place of pleasure, a symbol of western society since ancient Greek times, offers a space of reflection on the contemporary human being: it is the place of the limit. In these rooms men and women take their time apart, they question their bodies and their minds. They challenge themselves, in their insecurities or vanities. Alone, even if together in the same room, men and women impose upon themselves a state of sufferance, which means

fight and redemption. Here, they question the notion of limit, ignoring it, or simply pushing it into an extreme.

Through athletics, we become aware of our body, yet our mind is at the center of a constant stream of thoughts. Through the movements of our mind, we push our intellect forward; we analyze our inner-self, and perhaps change our perceptions of things. As we engage our physicality in the gym, we drive ourselves into a state that is no longer bearable, in which our body starts to fail.

This group exhibition aims at analyzing the concept of limit, which is not just physical but, mainly, psychological and spiritual. What is the role of the limit in a place such as the gym? Is it a microcosm of our daily living experience? Is it an obstacle? Is it simply inexistent? Four artists try to explain what this relationship between physical and mental activity consists of. Their art can explain all of this, or it can, instead, raise more questions. However, it touches something emotional and metaphysical that can go beyond rationality.

Sponsored by:  
Lungotevere Fitness  
STAND

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## **REINVENTING FEMINISM**

**Sara Basta, Mariana Ferratto, Susan Derges, Alice Maher, Mathilde ter Heijne**

Curated by Ayse Aktunali, Flavia Catarinelli. Martina Cimarosa, Julia Harris, Siena Hicks

**Opening Tuesday, April 15 | 5.00 – 10.00 pm**  
One day exhibition

Casa Internazionale delle Donne  
Palazzo del Buon Pastore. Via della Lungara, 19, Rome

Reinventing Feminism is a group show with five female artists whose works reflect feminism in everyday life. The artists Sara Basta, Mariana Ferratto, Susan Derges, Alice Maher, and Mathilde ter Heijne all have strong feminist ideas that they express through different perspectives in their works of art.

In modern times, and certainly in the western world, feminism has become less of an issue. Although woman's rights are now supposedly equal to men, the past and the traditional way of thinking makes it almost impossible for total equality. It is the interest towards what makes women different from men that the show wishes to deal with. A husband and wife vow to share a life together, and hence share responsibilities; yet it is the woman who is stereotyped as the mother. The wife's tasks are restricted to those within the walls of the house, thus all other passions and money-making skills are somewhat neglected. These stereotypes were of course more exaggerated in the past and on the surface it would appear that women are no

longer considered solely a man's partner, but equal competitor.

*Reinventing Feminism* aims at showing the subtlety that still remains regarding the topic of gender inequality. Although it may not be widely accepted to voice these views, there is still an underlying sense of inequality among sexes. Female artists have only started to become more accepted and popular in the past forty years. Before that, art was mostly dominated by men and for male audiences, sometimes transgressing against females, often using women and their bodies as objects rather than only subjects. For centuries men have maintained a studio system which has excluded women from training as artists, a gallery system that has kept them from exhibiting and selling their work, as well as from being collected by museums. This has, however changed in recent years and the importance of female art and the female subject as a tool for social critique has become recognized by society. This subject has been especially effective for female artists in order to create a difference and to be a guide for many women who are discriminated against. Feminist art started with the idea of expressing women's feelings and experiences that are usually ignored by men and society.

While the works of the artists included in the show may not seem to be traditionally feminist, they show a contemporary approach to feminism which is their strongest common point. The works deal with topics such as history, memory, loss, and intimacy, all of them related to the female condition today. The practices of Sara Basta, Mariana Ferratto, Susan Derges, Alice Maher, and Mathilde ter Heijne bring a reviewed contemporary and perhaps more subtle expression of feminism.

In collaboration with:

Business Club, Art History Club and IPAZIA Club - John Cabot University, Rome

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## **Struct**

**Edoardo Aruta, Mariana Ferratto, Quite Ensemble, Pablo Mesa Capella**

Curated by Federica D'Agostini, Rachel Feldman, Hannah Garza, Sophie Lo

**Opening Tuesday, April 15 | 6.30 pm**

Asa Nisi Masa Gallery

<http://www.anmgallery.com/>

*Struct* is a group show which explores time as an external and internal boundary of our society through the eyes of Edoardo Aruta, Mariana Ferratto, Quiet Ensemble, and Pablo Mesa Capella. Bringing these artists' practice together allows the viewer to look at time and structure in different contemporary perspectives. What emerges from the diverse artworks can combine into a singular yet unique idea: time is both personal and impersonal in our lives.

Time is an internal structure. The clocks in our bodies tick, but we don't know when our lives will end. We want to quantify our life and need expiration dates for ourselves. Yet, there is no definitive way to gauge it as time is experienced differently through different eyes. Time also has an external structure, where we wind clocks and set appointments. External time is tangible and mathematic.

*Struct.* comes from the Latin root meaning to build. This root leads us to many charged words -- "construct," "obstruct," "deconstruct," and "destruct." These words exemplify the rules we set for ourselves through the lives we live and the life that goes on around us.

*Why Aruta, Ferratto, Quiet Ensemble, and Capella?*

Edoardo Aruta's photographs immediately question time and allude to the manipulation of it. Time is a creation by man and its essence can only be experienced by consciousness of each person. Mariana Ferratto, on the other hand, allows us to see a singular train station but its context is lost. The times of a train station go on with or without us— if our times don't match up we miss our train. Quiet Ensemble experiments with seeing the greater paths of our lives. They look at a life from an external stand point. Pablo Mesa Capella seals an entire world between the containments of a globe. This is another kind of moment frozen in time, where we must reflect on the juxtaposition of man-made objects and nature. The constraints of the globe freeze a specific point in time. Aruta, Ferratto, Quiet Ensemble, and Capella are from this generation. These young artists each have been shaped, inspired, and nurtured by the rituals of our society, and thus have created work immensely diverse yet with the same subliminal idea.

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## **SIMPLICITY TO COMPLEXITY: Building towards the future while reflecting on the past**

**Anabella Cuomo, Mariagrazia Pontorno, Caterina Silva, Angela Zurlo**

Curated by: Lindsay Hochberg, Cami Porcaro, Jordan Pollack, Isabel Dolgin, Claire Odorico

**Opening Tuesday, April 15 | 6.30 pm**

Asa Nisi Masa Gallery

<http://www.anmgallery.com/>

The passage of time is an obscurity of human nature, of which many people try to find the true meaning. Where does time go and how do we cope with the creation of memories, as they become merely a figment of our imaginations? *Simplicity to complexity: Building towards the future while reflecting on the past* aims to portray, through its contributing artists, how a simple society has become transformed into one of vast complexity. Life is no longer as simple as it once was.

The artworks displayed in the exhibition will portray this theme as each piece builds on each other to show the development of complexity. The artworks on show demonstrate

complexity through their techniques and images, but at the same time they all exhibit an element of simplicity.

The first work experienced by the spectator is a photographic piece by Anabella Cuomo, in which a contemporary photograph is layered upon an older one. In this artwork it can be seen that the way we live today is reminiscent, but far from identical to, how we lived in the past. The work foreshadows the change of time, from old to new, introducing the concept of the show. As time progresses, we build upon layers of history and of memories. This reality is depicted by the artistic techniques employed by Anabella Cuomo.

Continuing the experience of the show, the audience will be confronted with the paintings *Lasciare essere* (2012) and *xx\xy* (2010) by Caterina Silva. The fluid symbolic brushstrokes employed by Silva depict trees of life in the cycle, and serve as a perfect connection between the past and the present. Further displaying this metaphor are the bright buds beginning to grow on the barren trees in the work thereby showing the creation of one life as another simultaneously passes on. Silva's work in itself is a direct representation of the passage of time, intending time as an endless phenomenon symbolized by the long brushstrokes. The bright colors used by the artist provide a stark contrast to those used by Cuomo thereby, portraying the present as opposed to Cuomo's representation of the past. The juxtaposition of light and dark as we move along in the exhibition continues to demonstrate the passage of time.

The next artworks displayed in the show are from Angela Zurlo's collection: *You are here* (2011) and *Fringe Making* (2013). Zurlo's graffiti art fits in perfectly with the vision of the exhibition. It complements the vibrant theme of Silva's work, but at the same time further exemplifies the movement of time exploring the history of Graffiti art as a contemporary cultural form, intended as a true representation of urban life. The intricacies of this artwork are complex and demonstrate the increasing complexity that accompanies the passage of time. Zurlo's piece was originally conceived for a public sphere and reflects the social metropolitan ground.

The final piece in the exhibition is a video artwork by Mariagrazia Pontorno evoking both an optimistic and ominous mood. The 3D animation *Roots* (2010) evokes feelings of optimism as it displays nature in the context of light, yet the mood of the video changes when the sky turns gray and buildings are uprooted into outer space. The uprooting of buildings and swaying of flowers in this video, leads the viewer to contemplate what will be next in the realm of time. Though this video does not explicitly offer an opinion on the future, it provides closure to the exhibition.

If *Simplicity to complexity: Building towards the future while reflecting on the past's* first piece foreshadows the passage of time, the closing piece confirms this.