



PRESS RELEASE

THE GOD TRICK

**Lara Almarcegui, Michel Blazy, Critical Art Ensemble, Piero Gilardi
Bonnie Ora Sherk, Nomeda e Gediminas Urbonas**

curated by Marco Scotini

May 5th – October 21th 2018

On Friday 4 May, at 6.30 pm, the PAV Parco Arte Vivente will present ***The God-Trick***, a group exhibition curated by **Marco Scotini**, and with which PAV aims to celebrate the ten years of its opening. The exhibition will open in conjunction with an important international conference. Starting with the work of artists who have collaborated with PAV in the past or, in other words, **Lara Almarcegui, Michel Blazy, the Critical Art Ensemble, Piero Gilardi, Bonnie Ora Sherk and Nomeda and Gediminas Urbonas**, the goal of both the exhibition and the conference is to address (and, furthermore, see as an issue) one of the debates which, over the past few years, has been to the forefront of the international, contemporary art scene: the questions relating to the Anthropocene. This will be a pervasive and choral debate crossing most diverse ambits of knowledge. From science to cultural studies, from philosophy to sound practices, from politics through to the visual arts, a multitude of voices have created a complex interweaving of opinions, theories and pragmatic proposals, beginning with the urgency created by climate change and the environmental modifications of an anthropogenic matrix.

The exhibition title takes its inspiration from one of the central figures of the debate such as Donna Haraway. Known by most as the mother of Cyber feminism, Haraway has tried, many times, to disarticulate every conventional approach to reading the Anthropocene, eventually formulating workable alternatives and metaphors laden with narrative and generative power. Haraway wrote: "*We also don't want to theorize the world, much less act within it, in terms of Global Systems*". On the contrary, this means subjecting any kind of claim to the 'objectivizing' of the real to a detailed and prompt exercise of skepticism, of deconstructive analysis, of doubt. This exercise would reveal that which Haraway provocatively defines as "the God Trick": a trick based on the illusion of eliminating the body of knowledge. For Haraway, knowledge is always *situated knowledge*, implanted within and *from* within a body whose ability to experience things is always determined by a precise burden of memory, a precise burden of history. In turn, this subject, has also been addressed by Jason W. Moore, in relation to the opposing elements of humankind/nature.

From the invitation to Haraway's *situated knowledge*, *The God-Trick* exhibition's path unfolds: beginning with **Nomeda and Gediminas Urbonas's** experiments into alternative energy, **by means of the documents** relating to the *Folk Stone Power Plant*, a project that was originally designed for the Folkestone Triennial (UK) in which an installation activated an international network of scientists. To this is added a relational and collective analysis of the waters with which the **Critical Art Ensemble** questions the organization of our choices in ecological terms, proposing a laboratory process aimed at initiating a necessary conversation on this important problem. **Lara Almarcegui** will be presenting an unpublished formalization of the work *Scavo*, made at the PAV in 2009, in which revealing the different strata of the earth meant, above all, analyzing the past of the area under investigation, a past in which nature and

social and industrial history are intertwined. We then arrive at the pedagogy of **Bonnie Ora Sherk's *Living Library***, a new systemic framework, strategy and methodology for planning, designing, implementing and maintaining over time operations of the 'ecologizing' and re-greening of specific areas in various schools and communities. The exhibition ends with the large external interventions by **Michel Blazy** and **Piero Gilardi**. Where Blazy, with his *Forêt de balais* installation, uncovers the unexpected marvels of which nature is capable in its reclaiming of the areas which humankind has appropriated, Gilardi proposes *Labirintico Antropocene*, a labyrinthine path aimed at supporting us through the equally labyrinthine perception of the environmental crisis and climate change, rendered even more nebulous by the manipulative rhetoric of the mainstream media.

All these works have the role of reminding us that there is nothing *natural*, nothing objective, nothing inevitable about the processes of capitalist accumulation, thereby encouraging us to go beyond the confines of thoughts that prevent us from seeing any alternative to the system.

Alongside the exhibition's display area, the subjects proposed by the artists will be at the center of a second type of area, a discursive space articulated over two days of symposium, opening in parallel with *The God-Trick*. The aim, once again, is to discuss crucial issues head-on: how much time do we have left before the eco-systemic crisis becomes irreversible? By means of which social, political and cultural norms can we kick-start the profound transformation needed to create an equal and bio-centric society in a harmonious relationship with the eco-system of Planet Earth?

The debate will be opened on **Friday 4 May at 3.30 pm** and foresees the participation of **Serenella Iovino, Serge Latouche, Stefano Mancuso** and **Luca Mercalli**, moderated by **Vincenzo Santarcangelo**. On **Saturday 5 May at 10 am**, the second day of the symposium will analyze the potential of art in social, bio-centric transformations, thanks to the contributions of the speakers **Gaia Bindi, Nathalie Blanc, Valerie Da Costa, Marco Scotini** and **Sue Spaid**, moderated by **Franco Torriani**. In the evening (3-6 pm) **Piero Gilardi** and **Roberto Marchesini** will introduce the **plenary** with the interventions of the artists of the exhibition. The whole program will end at **6 pm** with a speech by **Bonnie Ora Sherk**.

Steve Kurtz – Critical Art Ensemble will lead the workshop *Environmental dilemmas: Necropolitics and Public*, on **Sunday 6 May**, from 12 am to 4 pm.

The exhibition and the symposium are supported by Compagnia di San Paolo, Fondazione CRT, Regione Piemonte and the City of Turin.

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