

KUNST MERAN
im Haus der Sparkasse
MERANO ARTE
edificio Cassa di Risparmio



Same same but different

curated by Laura Barreca and Christiane Rekade

**artists: Claudia Barcheri, Ingrid Hora, Loredana Longo,
Christian Martinelli, Ignazio Mortellaro, Studio++**

Press Conference: Merano Arte, April 19, 11 am

April 21 – July 8, 2018: Merano Arte, opening: Friday, April 20, 2018, 7 pm

May 7 – July 22: Museo Civico di Castelbuono, opening: Sunday, May 6, 2018, 12 am

The collective exhibition *Same same but different* was born from the collaboration of two institutions that are to be found in Italy's furthest north and furthest south, respectively: Merano Arte and Museo Civico di Castelbuono (Palermo). It investigates the actual situation, life and artistic production conditions in Sicily and in South Tyrol, together with a group of artists (three for each region).

The two exhibitions will be held from April 21 to July 8, 2018, at Kunstmeran, and from May 7 to July 22 at the Civic Museum of Castelbuono.

Starting from two different historical and geographical realities, the aim of this exhibition is to investigate the socio-cultural and anthropological dynamics that have developed between Sicily and South Tyrol which thus regard Italy in its entirety. *Same same but different* wants to open new viewpoints from the two most extreme sides of Italy, and therefore offer a thoughtful moment on this land's diversities and complexities.

The six artists are invited to reflect the contemporary social debate that is of interest today not only to our Country, but to Europe and the Mediterranean Sea. The objective, starting from two completely different – yet similar - geographical conditions, is directed to underline how certain dynamics can be configured in Italy, between Sicily and South Tyrol, to be then made manifest on a global scale; i.e. on integration or exclusion values, on immigration, on cultural and identity hierarchies. Which identity can be possibly drawn nowadays to Europe and its nations? Which new characters are progressively being inserted in the international scenery? What do the concepts of "border" and of "nation" correspond to? And within the Italian context, which cultural conditions, and which differences exist between North and South?

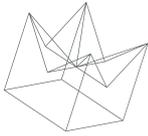
By facing the above-mentioned themes, will it be possible to rebuild a plausible hypothesis, expression of a contemporary condition that has the privilege to set itself as the privileged artistic observatory? As Rolf Petri (Full Professor of Contemporary History at University Cà Foscari of Venice) writes: "As a matter of fact, the paradoxes of a national border betray a basic uncertainty, an unsolved and maybe unsolvable difficulty in an identification with the nation in all-embracing terms. We are not talking of a certain liquefaction of a national identity, otherwise solid and fulfilling, towards geographic borders where the national

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community is exposed to the promiscuous contact with the Other. Rather, the borders represent a particularly incisive symbol of the balance between the inclusion and exclusion of the Other that keeps the national identity *tout court*, suspended, and therefore, alive.”

Another important characteristic that binds the two regions together is their key position in connecting the north and the south, besides the situation of being set at the borders. While South Tyrol connects Italy with Central Europe, thus looking at Western culture, Sicily is in a central position inside the Mediterranean Sea, directly connected to middle-eastern geopolitical sceneries.

The title *Same same but different*, is taken from the English-Thai (Tinglish) saying. It is starting from this internationally spread expression that the exhibition faces nowadays issues like the concept of belonging to a community. Two meetings have been held to prepare for the show, respectively in Merano and in Castelbuono. Meetings that have given the artists an occasion to deal with the different territories, also thanks to the involvement of several professionals, like historians, curators, restorers, territorial museum directors, and donkey breeders. The artworks that will be proposed in this double exhibition, give back also the considerations these experiences have triggered.

Claudia Barcheri, artist from Brunico, active in Monaco, makes a group of works starting from the logo on the back of the “Italian Republic” documents, chosen as her reference to themes like belonging, identity, which is also an autobiographical dimension. She will rebuild the logo with plastic materials worked as reliefs she will set in a dialogue with the exhibiting spaces of the two museum for *Same same but different*.

Ingrid Hora, from Bolzano who lives and works in Berlin, proposes a work in which the folkloric – social and historical - elements, are transposed in visual and performance representations by reconnecting the traditional South Tyrolean figure of the female cow-milkers, and to the actual adoption in Castelbuono of female donkey-milkers also bound to the farmers civilization, to the door to door waste sorting.

Loredana Longo, from Catania, active in Milan, questions herself thanks to her work specifically thought for the ‘NOI / LORO, LORO / NOI’ exhibition on otherness, on the constantly present juxtaposition between “us” and “they” which implies a difference, be it in character, social, political, sexual, of gender or of birth.

Christian Martinelli, photographer and reporter born in Merano, his origins are from Sardinia and Trentino, at the moment active in Innsbruck and Merano, will suggest a project that has seen him run along all the Italian coasts with an enormous aluminium camera he himself created. The series of images obtained by this process, gives us back a vision of borders not actually as geographical sites, rather as almost abstract and poetic impressions.

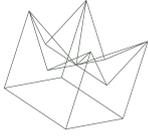
Ignazio Mortellaro, sculptor from Palermo, will suggest his consideration on the concept of

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measure starting from the recovery of systems preceding the import of the metric system, narrowly tied to the body (the length of the arm, of the step, the palm...) and different in every region. He thus investigates and sees the standardization of measure systems as the outcome of the unity of Italy, the meanings of unity and unification.

The artistic collective, based in Florence, **Studio++** suggest a declination of a project born as a web, immaterial artwork: *Navigare* (surfing) is in fact the direct shooting of the bow of a cruising intercontinental ship captured by a webcam and uploaded on the Internet. The artwork, meant to trigger thoughts on navigation as a tool and a metaphor of knowledge, is "materialized" as it is proposed for the first time within the context of a museum.

The exhibition will be held simultaneously in Castelbuono and in Merano by inviting all the artists to work on a double track, so that a constant dialogue can develop.

The section of the Castelbuono show will be inserted in the program of the initiatives: *Palermo, Capital of the Italian Culture 2018*, and it is a collateral event of Manifesta 12, Contemporary Art European Biannual.

Same same but different was ideated by Laura Barreca, director of the Civic Museum in Castelbuono, and Christiane Rekade, artistic director of Merano Arte. A publication in Italian, German, and English is foreseen, with texts by the curators, and by Valentina Bruschi and Anna Zinelli, edited by Arianna Edizioni.

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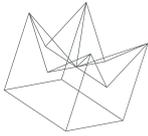
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