



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

**KUNST MERAN MERANO ARTE**  
**From 19 May to 30 August 2020**

## **RESENTMENT / RISENTIMENTO / RESSENTIMENT**

### ***A sentiment for our time?***

**Curated by Christiane Rekade**

*Resentment is like taking poison and waiting for the other person to die*  
Malachy McCourt

**19 May to 30 August 2020, KUNST MERAN MERANO ARTE** is hosting the show **RESENTMENT**, analysing an emotional state that characterises the present era like few others. Taking different approaches and perspectives, thirteen international contemporary artists – **Teodora Axente, Francesca Grilli, Massimo Grimaldi, Klara Lidén, Christian Niccoli, Riccardo Previdi, Liesl Raff, Monika Sosnowska, Barbara Tavella, Wolfgang Tillmans, Beatrice Volpi, Raul Walch** and **Gernot Wieland** – will address this issue.

The exhibition, curated by Christiane Rekade, is the offspring of an interdisciplinary collaboration between KUNST MERAN MERANO ARTE, the Conductus association and string ensemble, and the Alpha Beta publishing house. Starting from a reflection on the deepest meaning of resentment, all three investigate it from a literary, musical and artistic point of view, offering a series of events and initiatives.

Underlying the project is a series of works by ten different contemporary authors, invited by Alpha Beta, venturing into this theme by means of short stories. For its part, the **Conductus Ensemble**, under the direction of Marcello Fera, will dedicate the next annual *Sonora* festival to the theme of *Resentment / Risentimento / Ressentiment* with new productions and concerts created specially for the occasion.



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The exhibition begins with authors who question the relationship between art and social commitment, leading to a reflection on the political usage and instrumentalisation of resentment and opposing these with a critical view of the present. It then continues with a confrontation with space, which can be public or private, collective or personal, in which are often consumed the reasons for separation, exclusion and limitation that constitute fertile ground for this feeling to proliferate.

Resentment is therefore the subject of a more intimate analysis, sometimes linked to an artist's individual life and experience, but also to a contrast with his or her artistic achievements.

The exhibition opens with a wall of posters by the German photographer **Wolfgang Tillmans** (born Remscheid 1968, now lives in Berlin), in whose enquiry the concept of participation plays a fundamental role. Tillmans opposes the resentment triggered by isolationist strategies through a directly involved approach, carrying out several campaigns – freely downloadable from his website ([tillmans.co.uk](http://tillmans.co.uk)) – that are designed to encourage people to vote for the UK to remain in Europe and for other initiatives.

**Francesca Grilli** (Bologna 1978, lives in Brussels) addresses the theme of contemporary migration through a series of sculptures, a workshop and the performance *The forgetting of air*, in which performers of various geographical origins share with the public their breath – the most essential gesture of a human being.

**Riccardo Previdi** (Milan 1974, lives in Merano) analyses the concept of belonging with *Tavoli* (2017) in which the flags of neighbouring states that have been or potentially will be at war are printed superimposed on tables, thus altering their colours and symbolic values and bringing them into a dimension of practical and everyday use.

**Raul Walch** (Frankfurt 1980, lives in Berlin) offers an unconventional artistic confrontation with social reality, often through routines in public spaces. For Merano he has created a series of mobiles, suspended, moving sculptures, in the form of kites that stimulate a reflection on the highly fragile – and often broken – balance of social justice.

**Klara Lidèn** (Stockholm 1979, lives in Berlin) looks at domestic and urban spaces, redefining and deconstructing them through a series of destabilising, sometimes subversive and seemingly senseless actions, which can lay the foundations for new ways of reappropriation.

**Monika Sosnowska** (Ryki 1977, lives in Warsaw) has designed a labyrinthine structure with no



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exit that narrows to block the path of the spectator, who then finds himself or herself suffering from the same feeling of lack of space that often gives rise to resentment, but also prompts them to think about possible ways out.

*Texts* by **Massimo Grimaldi** (Taranto 1974, lives in Milan) confront the architectural space, like Tillmans adopting the use of placards and using these for messages of a poetic character with which he often questions the criteria for the production and dissemination of images, the role of the institutions dedicated to art as well as that played by the artist.

A personal dimension emerges in the paintings of **Barbara Tavella** (La Valle, Province of Bolzano, 1972, lives in La Villa, Province of Bolzano), often related to the artist's experiences, realised through a process based upon overlapping colours in a continuous development that seems to refer to the etymological meaning of resentment as a continuously repeated feeling. Reflection on the pictorial medium returns in the research of **Teodora Axente** (Sibiu 1984, lives in Cluj-Napoca); her 2015 work *Untitled* stands as a link with Alpha Beta's editorial project, the starting point of the exhibition, as it is used as the cover for the first two volumes dedicated to resentment.

**Christian Niccoli** (1976 Bolzano, lives in Berlin) instead reworks his own experiences in a series of drawings of a surreal character, often in the form of self-portraits; working mainly through video and video installations, Niccoli is exhibiting these works in Merano for the first time, works that were for years regarded as simple working "notes" but subsequently reread in autonomous form.

A poetic, often tragicomic dimension also characterises the works of **Gernot Wieland** (Horn 1968, lives in Berlin), who will at the opening present a lecture-performance accompanied by projections and who will present an installation at the exhibition. Starting from a medley of autobiographical and historical events, real and imagined, Wieland confronts a personal and collective memory and its repressed experiences.

Another personal experience is the basis for the creation of the *Transitional Spaces* of **Liesl Raff** (Stuttgart 1974, lives in Vienna): the idea came to her in Mexico City, in the house-laboratory of Luis Barragán, one of the greatest Mexican architects of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These spaces are understood as thresholds, bridges connecting the interior and exterior, places of emotional transformation. In Merano Raff has realised a kind of shelter with a roof of palm trees, a safe space but also a place of change, of care and of awareness.

The idea of "care", in the broadest sense of the term, is also at the heart of the workshop



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presented by **Beatrice Volpi**, a therapist specializing in breathing, voice, singing and hypnosis. With *PER-DONO*, Volpi invites us to “enter the room of resentment” for an intense sensory experience that can lead us to the feeling of a new beginning.

The term *resentment*, from the French *ressentir*, literally indicates a feeling that is prolonged over time, that repeats itself, a form of rancour that is concealed and reiterated. One dictionary defines it as “a prejudice, a sense of inferiority or similar, based upon an emotional aversion that is often unconscious”.

This notion has its roots in the thought of Friedrich Nietzsche, who understood it as a key term in his vision of the genealogy of morality. He described “the psychology of resentment” as a form of voluntary poisoning through repressed vengeance. Drawing critically upon Nietzsche, the German philosopher and sociologist Max Scheler (1874-1928) described resentment as a typically modern phenomenon occurring particularly in societies where, while there is formal equality between people, there exist huge differences in the distribution of power and wealth, in terms of education and social status.

Francesca Grilli appears with the collaboration of ArtVerona / Level 0.



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## RESENTMENT / RISENTIMENTO / RESENTIMENT

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Curator: Christiane Rekade

Duration of show: 19 May - 30 August 2020

Venue: Merano Arte – Edificio Cassa di Risparmio  
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