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Art
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Orari Museo Villa Croce:
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Riccardo Previdi
WHAT NEXT?

curated by Frida Carazzato
in collaboration with Art Test Fest and
Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia, Genoa

April 23rd - June 18th 2017

Press Preview: Friday, April 21st 11.30^{am} - 1.00^{pm}

Opening: Saturday, April 22nd 6.00^{pm} - 9.00^{pm}

Villa Croce presents *What Next?*, the first solo exhibition by Riccardo Previdi (Milan, 1974) in an Italian museum. The show contains a series of works including installations, paintings and videos, resulting from various experiences and recent collaborations, such as the one with the Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia in Genoa, which gave rise to a nucleus of new works, one of which has the same title as the exhibition.

The solo show of Riccardo Previdi begins with a large luminous sign, *OPEN*, installed on the roof of the museum, and then continues on the *Piano Nobile*, the first floor of the neoclassical building. Produced on a large scale in China and then sold all over the world, these luminous LED signs scatter the same aesthetic of blue and red lights through the windows of shops of different kinds in many cities. Riccardo Previdi, as often happens in his artistic practice, takes over this object and transforms it, charging it with ulterior meanings. Two works have thus been developed, both with the title *OPEN*. Through an operation of enlargement, for the outdoor space the sign becomes a sculpture of almost five by three meters, which for the show in Genoa is placed on the roof of the villa, making it visible from both the street and the sea. Through a procedure of assembly, 16 of these signs become a chandelier with an octagonal form, *OPEN (Chandelier)*, hung in the first room of the exhibition itinerary. For the artist, *OPEN* is an invitation and a statement of presence, but also an indication of the intrinsic complexity of the economic, social and political dynamics of our time. A parallel is established between the display context of Villa Croce and the title of the exhibition: what happens next when you enter the museum and walk up to the floor that hosts the exhibition? *What Next?* transforms the query that Mario Merz, one of the greatest exponents of Arte Povera, raised as the object of his works ("*che fare?*", what is to be done?), in an attitude of skepticism regarding the near future of a society dominated by the frenetic pace of events, information and technological innovation that increasingly determine new relationships between science, the individual and the global society.

Not by chance, *What Next?* is also the title of a new work that narrates the encounter of the artist with recent scientific research in the field of physics. Through dialogue with the Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia (IIT) of Genoa, Riccardo Previdi has had a chance to come to grips with optical nanoscopy, i.e. the technology that makes it possible to get beyond the limits of sight imposed by the microscope in the study of infinitely small things. Technology has reduced the distances in the visual capacity of the human eye, reaching the point of allowing us to see, and thus to study, the molecules that make up cells. This is the inspiration for seven new paintings by the artist, *What Next? (Human Burkitt Lymphoma Cells)*, made by starting with microscopic scans of tumor cells, then reworked using the same process applied in the previous works by the artist, entitled *Test*, based on the development of patterns and printing proofs.

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The images created by the artist starting with the microscopic scans form a sequence that generates a sort of new landscape, in dialogue with the natural landscape that can be seen outside, through the windows of Villa Croce. On the other hand, the work *Spaccare il capello in quattro* (Splitting Hairs) has been produced starting with nanoscopic imaging done at IIT Genoa, where one strand of hair of the artist has been enlarged eight times, revealing its molecular structure while at the same time creating a completely abstract image. Both the work *What Next? (Human Burkitt Lymphoma Cells)* and *Spaccare il capello in quattro* link back to the crux of Riccardo Previdi's research, creating a connection between technology used in science and processes of production and post-production of images.

Like the work *OPEN* at the entrance of the museum, the pieces recently produced for the exhibition become the metaphor of the threshold that progressively establishes and modifies itself between the observer and the object observed, between private and public space, personal and shared experience. As in the series entitled *COCOON*, which has roots in one of Riccardo Previdi's first works, made in 2000 and entitled *Catarifrangente* (Reflector), in which the artist appears "cocooned" in a highly reflective material. Some time later, the artist goes back to those works in which he had himself packaged with what is normally used to wrap goods. The actions are photographed and shot by a video camera inside private spaces, as can be seen in the video *AMPEL-MAN* edited in 32:9, i.e. two shots of 16:9 combined to permit simultaneous viewing of two actions that happened in different times and places.

For Villa Croce, for the first time Previdi shows a series of wrappers, displayed against a gray background painted on the wall that transforms them into something like paintings. Entitled *Vacuum*, these abstract formal compositions represent time capsules, ironically personal traces suspended in time and left for future researchers.

What Next?, though expressed as a question, in the practice and approach of Riccardo Previdi becomes an "epoché," a suspension of judgment about the future, starting with the complexity of the present.

The exhibition was developed starting with **Art Test Fest**, the contemporary art festival held in Genoa in November 2016, with the support of Compagnia di San Paolo, in the context of the *ORA!* Program to create a zone of encounter between artists and producers of new technologies. The artist took part in this event with a residency and a workshop during which he discussed his relationship with technology and scientific thought. This experience led to the works: *What next? (Human Burkitt Lymphoma Cells)*, 2017, and *Spaccare il capello in quattro*, 2017, the latter done in collaboration with the Department of Nanoscopy of IIT Genoa.

Riccardo Previdi (Milan, 1974) works and lives between Berlin (Germany) and Merano (Italy). He studied architecture at *Politecnico di Milano* and visual arts at *Accademia di Brera*, these two different studies led him to an interest in the relationship between art and project. He has participated to many collective shows, in Italy and abroad, such as: *1st Moskow Biennial* (2005); *Manifesta 7*, Rovereto, Trento, Bolzano (2008); *21x21: 21 artisti per il 21° Secolo* at Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2010); *Wir sind alle Astronauten* at MARTa, Herford (2011). Recent major solo exhibitions include: *Fraktur*, De Vleeshal, Middelburg (2009); *Wrong Test*, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, New York (2011); *Chrome*, Lichthaus, Arnsberg (2011); *OPEN*, Edison Open Garden, Triennale di Milano, Milan (2015). Since 2006 he is represented by the Milanese gallery Francesca Minini. After living fifteen years in Berlin, he just moved in Merano, Alto Adige / Südtirol. In Berlin, among others collaborations, he worked in Olafur Eliasson studio and he realized the *Green Light Pavilion*, a structure for temporary exhibitions where have been held also personal shows of Thomás Saraceno, Monika Sosnowska and Wolfgang Breuer. He also curated shows and exposed at AUTOCENTER, nationalmuseum and Galleria Sommer & Kohl.

Frida Carazzato (Padua, 1980) is assistant curator at Museion, Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Bolzano (Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, Italy). She curates the video and performance program for the *Facciata Mediale* at Museion and the art projects for the public space Piccolo Museion – Cubo Garutti. Until 2016 she curated also the exhibitions for the Project Room of the museum.