

Mathilde Hatzenberger Gallery

present



Human condition

Olivia BARISANO / Mai TABAKIAN

April 20th > May 21th 2012



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Mathilde Hatzenberger Gallery
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MH Gallery is proud to present its 4th exhibition:

Human condition a unique project devised by 2 young newcomers onto the art scene, **Olivia Barisano** (BE) and **Mai Tabakian** (FR).

Human condition explores the two sides of the same mountain with two different, though converging, eyes.

Both artists question the human condition through their specific personalities.

Olivia Barisano's videos, installations and performances always focus on the body, committed, and even physically engaged, in an identity search placing her in the relative boundaries of her own life as well as in a more universal time frame.

Obstinate repetitions of movements and habits, ancestral exercises or spatial contortions, all create links among mankind and, simultaneously, a unique piece of art.

Olivia tries to disentangle the threads of transmission linking an adult woman to her childhood roots.

Her confounding expression is a reflection of our own life story.

Mai Tabakian's work is entitled « Common grounds or elective affinities » : 16 elements showed in frames without paintings, made from padded cotton wool fabric on extruded supports, a technique she customarily uses to create the feeling of an impossible palpation.

The presentation directly refers to Goethe's novel « Elective affinities ». The visual concept is also a reminder of his « Theory of colours ». This installation is like a whirlwind of colours, upsetting not only the theories of colours but also, allegorically, the theories of human matching.

Both work converge in a natural way: they are free of all determinist theory that would reduce mankind to bodies and, on the contrary, remind us that life, in all its colours, is full mystery and magic.

Together they write the story of Man devising various strategies in order to escape a predetermined fate.

They use the precision of textile and show the beauty in the repetition of daily exercises to reach the essential and express a unique sense of universal poetry.

Visuals et full biographies available on request.

Practical Information:

Opening with the artists

Friday April 20, 2012
6-9 pm

OPEN: Thursday to Monday, 11am to 6pm, except Sunday 11am to 3pm
And by appointment.

Closed: Tuesday and Wednesday.

Olivia BARISANO (1982)

Visual artist and designer.

Lives and works in Brussels.

Olivia Barisano on her concept:

Heritage, filiation, memory, transmission, daily life, rythm, attrition, repetition, anachronism, ritual, humanity and survival: such are the basis of my meditation and the outcome of my meeting with a muse, Nonna, my grandmother. Thanks to her infinite faith and strong presence, we weaved together a non-verbal relationship where I question the present, past, daily life full of expectations, vital and routine, where I can read and see the marks of time.

Videos and performances define the protagonist as the creator of her own daily adventure, a mixture of fiction and reality.

I find freedom in the extension of this activity while confronting myself to the issue of daily exercises such as peeling, grating, cleaning, spreading, eating and repairing.

Repetition and recurrence pace passing time while, simultaneously, partcipating in the universal time.

Like a living memory, I set to reproduce ancestral gestures and crafts and confront them with our contemporary world, therefore questioning consumers' society.

This metaphysical pendulum movement roots me into the ground and gets me back to my roots, my family origins and also my human condition where matter fills in the gaping hole of oblivion.

Mai TABAKIAN (1970)

Lives and works in Paris.

Mai generally goes for two variables of abstraction: either geometrical or organic. Mai plans coloured surfaces to attract the eye and, secondarily, reaching out for cuddling. Her paintings, objects and installations are all impeccably defined, seductively reaching out to our senses and eternally questioning our minds.

Mai Tabakian on her concept:

COMMON GROUNDS OR ELECTIVE AFFINITIES 2011.

This wall installation consists of 16 elements with a pattern drawn with a spirograph is a reference to the atomic nucleus. The 16 elements are presented in groups of 4, with different sizes and colours, each group representing an observing entity or focus group. We are supposed to look at their interaction and recognize their potential combinations.

This installation is a visual representation of the analogy between love attraction making and undoing couples and the chemical operations that govern the links and precipitations of chemical substances. Affinity becomes the law of nature, producing reactions in both chemistry and living creatures. It is loosely inspired from Goethe's novel „Theory of Colours“ and the expression „to have common grounds or hooked atoms“ coined by the Greek atomist philosophers Democritus and Epicurus.

Furthermore, the colour arrangement shown in this installation also refers to Goethe's „A Theory of Colours“.

Goethe's theory of colour polarity, the opposite of the trichromatic theory, is based on 4 basic colours, in 2 groups of 2 and the natural contrast between lightness and darkness.

This installation illustrates one of the principles outlined by Goethe: the notion of colour arises from a sensuous, spontaneous and revealing inner reflection.

Finally, this new project allows to pursue the ambiguity of the dual game recurrently appearing in my work, between attraction and repulsion, seduction and danger, microcosm and macrocosm.

Translation Esther G. Freifeld