

**Mendes Wood DM at Villa Era**

**Matthew Lutz Kinoy: Grand Entrance | Rebel Archives – curated by Sofia Gotti**

**31 May – 17 July 2021**



Mendes Wood DM is proud to announce its second cycle of exhibitions at Villa Era, a historic 19th-century house and estate in the Italian countryside, located near Biella, between Milan and Turin.

#### **Matthew Lutz-Kinoy: Grand Entrance**

The American-born, Paris-based artist Matthew Lutz-Kinoy is occupying the ground floor of Villa Era with a site-specific project titled *Grand Entrance*. The starting point for the artist's project is the concept of the *Theatrum Mundi* and his research into the lavish festivities that the Medici rulers were famous for staging throughout the city of Florence during the Renaissance, particularly the wedding of Arch Duke Ferdinando I de' Medici and Christine of Lorraine in 1589. Many architectural elements designed by Bernardo Buontalenti for this event still exist along with designs and etchings, as well as the accounts of these lavish festivities, including a reenactment of a naval battle that was staged in the flooded courtyard of Palazzo Pitti, and were elaborately reconstructed by the historian Aby Warburg.

The complex framework of these popular performative weddings saw public spaces, streets and cities decorated and framed as stages and theatrical platforms that merged existing architecture with artifice, stage props and imagined perspectives – architecture as theatre and vice versa. While events such as these would mix the registers of the aristocratic and the



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popular, these staged spaces, produced by the larger, socially organized bodies and governments of their day, were used to manifest their own power, their own mythologies and vision of themselves, in a way that used the population as players and violence as ornament.

In this spirit, Lutz-Kinoy's site-specific large-scale canvases, replete with colourful Renaissance and Baroque decorative motifs and theatrical compositions, interact with the architectures of Villa Era and propose a visually immersive layering of pageantry that is at once physically attached to the house and its furniture but detached from its history. By replicating tactics of presentation of Renaissance spectacles, the artist calls into question the frames and facades through which today's governments project narratives in social spaces.

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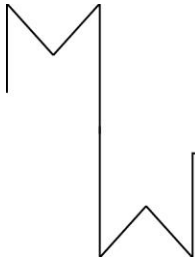
### **Rebel Archives**

On view throughout the first floor of the house is Rebel Archives, a project by guest curator Sofia Gotti, that brings together five artists whose work and archives are a testament to their fight against patriarchal and heteronormative structures. The exhibition creates a dialogue between Mendes Wood DM artists **Anna Bella Geiger** and **Rosana Paulino**, and the Italian artists **Mirella Bentivoglio**, **Nedda Guidi** and **Clemen Parrocchetti** who, between them, have seen their work exhibited at the Venice, Sydney and São Paulo Biennales, as well as institutions around the world including Palazzo Reale, Milan, and the Grand Palais, Paris. Each of these artists, who built their careers up by themselves, have been celebrated as shining examples of resistance towards a cultural and political system that discriminated against them on the grounds of class, race and gender.

The exhibition traverses eight rooms and will offer spotlight views of the experimental works of each artist, ranging from weaving, to drawing, ceramics, collage and photography. The rooms converge into a central space where materials from the artist's personal collections and archives are placed in dialogue with rare books selected from Villa Era's unique Steinerian library. Photographs, books and ephemera bring forth the multiple personal stories and shared themes that unite their practices. Here, the archive emerges as a space to rewrite history, draw connections and tease out unexpected relations between artists working in disparate contexts and timeframes, yet who share a common struggle.

This exhibition is possible thanks to the collaboration of the archives of Mirella Bentivoglio, Nedda Guidi and Clemen Parrocchetti.

The exhibition is viewable by appointment only by contacting  
[ermanno@mendeswooddm.com](mailto:ermanno@mendeswooddm.com) or [silvia@silviamacchetto.com](mailto:silvia@silviamacchetto.com)



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### **Villa Era**

Villa Era is located in Vigliano Biellese, Piedmont, near the Northern Italian town of Biella. The neo-classical Villa, which dates back to the late 19th century, is built in a private estate that connects to the ancient vineyard on the hillside behind it. From the 1970s to the 1990s, Villa Era was home to Eubiotica and I.C.A.R.E., two non-profit institutions that pioneered European scientific research on organic agriculture, holistic nutrition and Yoga and Ayurveda, hosting university-level courses, conferences and workshops taught by the greatest international experts, scholars, scientists and practitioners of their time. In 1990, the estate hosted the 10th Anniversary of the Right Livelihood Award, known as the “Alternative Nobel Prize”. Villa Era’s library, one of the first private libraries to be made public in Italy, contains more than 3,000 volumes and unique research papers on subjects including Indian philosophy, social sciences, ecology, Yoga, Ayurveda and macrobiotic nutrition.

### **Mendes Wood DM**

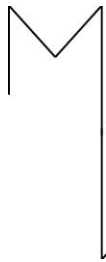
Mendes Wood DM was founded in 2010 by partners Felipe Dmab, Matthew Wood and Pedro Mendes with the intent to exhibit international and Brazilian artists in a context conducive to critical dialogue and cross-pollination. Central to the gallery’s program is a concern for regional difference and individuation while fostering cosmopolitanism and collaboration. Inspired by a belief that artistic practices broaden the scope of human agency and have the power to both touch and change the world, Mendes Wood DM cultivates a program premised on conceptualism, political resistance and intellectual rigor.

Press office

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## **Biographies**

**Matthew Lutz-Kinoy** (1984, New York) lives and works in Paris.

Working across various mediums including sculpture, printmaking, ceramics and painting, Matthew Lutz-Kinoy's allegiance is not fixed to a single medium but depends on their shared developments in form and a simultaneity in practice. Embracing the spirit of collaboration as a means to expand knowledge and skills, the breadth of techniques and references used across his practice are the result of many collaborative ventures. Where his ceramics are influenced by working with artists in Europe and Brazil, his large-scale paintings unearth his fascination with the refined, sophisticated and carnal painting style of the Renaissance, Baroque and Neo-Classical periods. At the core of Lutz-Kinoy's practice is performance. Influenced by histories of queer and collaborative practice as well as his background in theatre and choreography, his live work explores the interplay of narratives that are created and constructed between individuals and social spaces.

Recent solo shows include: Window to the Clouds, Salon Berlin (2021); Two Hands on Earth, Mendes Wood DM, Brussels (2019); Hudson Bathers, Mendes Wood DM, New York (2019); The Meadow, Le Centre d'édition Contemporaine, Geneva (2018); Southern Garden of the Château Bellevue, Le Consortium, Dijon (2018); Song And Love, Matthew Lutz-Kinoy & Ola Vasiljeva, Indipendenza, Rome (2018).

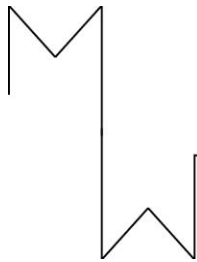
Selected group shows: Geneva Sculpture Biennial, Geneva (2019); Sharjah Biennial 14: Leaving the Echo Chamber with Isabel Lewis, Sharjah, (2018); Eckhaus Latta: Possessed, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2018); Welt ohne Außen. Immersive Spaces since the 1960s, Berliner Festspiele, Berlin (2018); Seasick in Paradise, Depart Foundation, Los Angeles (2017).

His work can be found in the collections of the FRAC Aquitaine, S.M.A.K. Gent, the ADN Collection, Bolzano, the Syz Collection, Geneva and the Rennie Museum, Vancouver.

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**Mirella Bentivoglio** (1922-2017)

While celebrated for her pioneering role in the context of 1970s Italian Feminist Art, Mirella Bentivoglio's practice was first and foremost about giving visibility to her peers in a male-dominated art world. She notably curated the first all-women exhibition at the Venice Biennale in 1978, and was at the centre of an extensive international mail art network reaching as far as Japan and Brazil. A central concern of her work is the re-configuration of language. Particularly in her visual poetry and photo collages, Bentivoglio materialised her militancy



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against the oppression and objectification of women. Bentivoglio's sculptures and employment of natural materials, from wood to bark and marble, manifest her ecological consciousness, locating her as a forerunner of eco-feminism. Bentivoglio donated large part of her extensive archive, including over 450 pieces and mail artworks by hundreds of artists, to the MART Rovereto.

Her exhibition history includes: Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome (1996), National Museum of Women in the Arts di Washington (1999), MACMA (Matino and Lecce, from 2011 to 2013). Her work has been show at nine editions of the Venice Biennale: 1969, 1972, 1978 (in two separate shows), and again in 1980, 1986, 1995, 2001 and 2009. She has taken part in the São Paulo Bienal three times (between 1973 and 1994), and has also taken part in three group shows at the Centre Pompidou, Paris, (between 1978 and 1982); Documenta Kassel in 1982; MoMA, New York in 1992; Palazzo Pitti, Florence, in 2001; at the Expo di Milano in 2015; and at the Getty Center, Los Angeles, in 2018.

**Anna Bella Geiger** (Rio de Janeiro, 1933) lives and works in Rio de Janeiro.

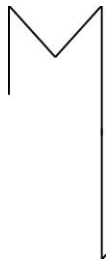
Anna Bella Geiger is widely acknowledged as one of the most important artists working in Brazil today. A pioneer of video art in the country, she was also one the great exponents of first generation Latin-American conceptual artists. Her trajectory, continuously marked by ruptures and a multiplicity of themes and methods, began in the 1950's and early 1960's. By the 1970's, Geiger's production assumed an experimental tone, breaking with the orientations of the modern period and radically exploring contemporary practices. Beginning to adopt methods such as photomontage, photogravure, photocopy and video, her thematic ambitions expanded in equal measure, resulting in pieces committed to critical rhetoric and strong political connotations. During this time, the artist also focused her dialog on anthropology and the study of the image, developing her "geo-poetry".

Her most recent solo exhibitions include: Brasil nativo/Brasil alienígena, MASP, São Paulo (2019); Maps under the sky of Rio de Janeiro, Zachęta – National Gallery of Art, Warsaw (2018); Anna Bella Geiger: Here is The Center, Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, New York (2018); Gavetas de Memórias, Caixa Cultural São Paulo, São Paulo (2018);

Institutional group shows include: Radical Women, Latin American Art, The Brooklyn Museum, New York (2018); América Latina 1960 - 2013, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris (2013); Vidéo Vintage, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2012); Modern Women Single Channel 5 Artists, MoMA PS1, New York (2011); Adding it up: Acquisitons 70-95, MoMA, New York (1995); 39th Venice Biennale, Venice (1980); PROSPECTIVA 74, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de São Paulo, São Paulo (1974); São Paulo Biennials, São Paulo (1961 - 1967).

**Nedda Guidi** (1927-2015)

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Immersed in Rome's art scene since the 1950s, Nedda Guidi challenged the dominant trends of her time through ceramic. Guidi experimented with her chosen medium in her words to "retrieve a lost innocence and recover the originality of the material." Her alchemical investigations into oxidation processes and pigments appear in her "swatch tables," which record the chemical formula, cooking process or the place and date of where she found the earth she used: a permanent archive of her research. Her experimentation further materialises in the colour gradients of her large scale modular geometric sculptures. Invested in opening a space for non-normative bodies in culture, she was part of a group of artists working on the rehabilitation of children affected by down syndrome, and co-founded the iconic feminist collective Cooperativa Beato Angelico in 1976, among multiple other initiatives.

Her exhibition history includes: Galleria Numero, Roma (1964); Galleria Numero Florence (1965); Biennale della Scultura, ceramica, metalli, legno, tessuti e altri materiali - 'Quindici anni di ricerca in ceramica (1961-1976) di Nedda Guidi', curated by Enrico Crispolti, Gubbio, Palazzo dei Consoli (1976); 1989 Galleria de Serpenti, Rome (1989); Galleria Rondanini, Roma (1990).

**Clemen Parrocchetti (1923-2016)**

"Objects of Female Culture," "Dreaming Gender Equality," "The Original Sin," "Liberation," are amongst the phrases used by Clemen Parrocchetti, to title her works. As part of the feminist collective Immagine di Varese (active in the late 70s), she is a protagonist of feminist militancy in Italy. Parrocchetti made tapestries, embroideries, and complex sculptural assemblages, which gathered sewing kits, cooking tools, sequins, alongside protruding stuffed fabric lips, hearts and breasts. Parrocchetti made art continually for over fifty years, and her work lives on thanks to her personal archive. Her family home, a medieval castle in Borgo Adorno, Piedmont, is now a House Museum and archive dedicated to her memory and to the family's history as direct descendants of Saint Catherine Fieschi Adorno, theologian and patron saint of Genoa.

Her solo exhibition history includes: Istituto Italiano di Cultura (2008) Stockholm; Museo di Storia Naturale, Milan (2003); Galleria Di Porta Ticinese, Milan (1985); Palazzo dei Diamanti, Ferrara (1978); Galleria dello Scudo, Verona (1973); Galleria Delle Ore, Milan (1958)

Her group exhibition history includes: Il Soggetto Imprevisto: 1978 Arte e Femminismo in Italia, FM Centro per L'Arte Contemporanea, Milan (2018); Parrocchetti. Tre generazioni di artisti. Antonio Clemen Alessandro, Borgo Adorno 2005; Femmes Artistes, Grand Palais, Paris (1982); Muestra Internacional de arte Grafica, Bilbao (1978); Biennale di Venezia (1978); Primo premio Pirandello, Agrigento (1977); Mostra Biennale Pittori Italiani, Palazzo Reale, Milan (1972); Mostra biennale pittori italiani, Palazzo Reale, Milan (1970); Mostra della resistenza

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alla Camera del Lavoro di Milano (1964); Mostra della resistenza alla Galleria d'Arte moderna di Milano, (1964); 1955-1965 Biennale di Milano (1955-65)

**Rosana Paulino** (São Paulo, 1967) lives and works in São Paulo.

Rosana Paulino's work centers around social, ethnic, and gender issues, focusing in particular on black women in Brazilian society and the various types of violence suffered by this population due to racism and the lasting legacy of slavery. Paulino explores the impact of memory on psychosocial constructions, introducing different references that intersect the artist's personal history with the phenomenological history of Brazil, as it was constructed in the past and still persists today. Her research includes the construction of myths – not only as aesthetical pillars but also as psychic influence-makers. Paulino – whose artistic output is unquestionably fundamental to Brazilian art – has produced a practice of reconstructing images and, beyond that, reconstructing memory and its mythologies. Her body of brings together female figures and their respective historical elements, supported by psychic traces that map colonial structures and their impact onto the social and aesthetic fabric of our time.

Her exhibition history includes: Beyond the Black Atlantic, Kunstverein Hannover, Hannover (2020); 22nd Sydney Biennial, Sydney (2020); 21<sup>st</sup> Bienal Sesc Videobrasil, Sesc 24 de Maio, São Paulo (2019); Paraíso Tropical, The Frank Museum of Art, Otterbein University, Ohio (2019); Rosana Paulino: A Costura da Memória, Museu de Arte do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro (2019); BÚFALA, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo (2019); Rosana Paulino – A costura da memória, Pinacoteca de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2018); Assentamento, Clifford Art Gallery, Colgate University, New York (2018); Atlântico Vermelho, Padrão dos Descobrimentos, Lisbon, Portugal (2017); South: Let Me Begin Again, Goodman Gallery Cape Town, South Africa (2017); Territórios: Artistas afrodescendentes no acervo da Pinacoteca, Pinacoteca de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2015).

**Dr Sofia Gotti** is the Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the History of art Department at the University of Cambridge. She specialises in contemporary, feminist and decolonial art practices in South America and Italy. Sofia has previously taught at the The Courtauld Institute of Art and the Nuova Accademia delle Belle Arti (NABA) in Milan. Her PhD was a collaborative studentship between UAL and Tate Modern, on occasion of the exhibition The World Goes Pop (2015). She obtained the prestigious Hilla Rebay International Curatorial Fellowship in 2015 and has since collaborated with organizations and galleries including The Feminist Institute, Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, FM-Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea, Blum&Poe, and Mendes Wood DM. Her research and writing has been published by Wiley Blackwell and Courtauld Books, as well as academic journals and magazines including ArtMargins, Tate Papers, n.paradoxa, Revista Hispanica Moderna, FlashArt, Mousse, Nero and Art-Agenda.

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