

RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA. TOMORROW IS THE QUESTION

curated by Camilla Mozzato

04.19 – 08.25.2019

press preview: Thursday, April the 18th, 12 p.m.

opening: Thursday, April the 18th, 6.00 p.m.

Centro per l'arte contemporanea Luigi Pecci

Tomorrow Is the Question is the first solo exhibition in an Italian museum by **Rirkrit Tiravanija** (Buenos Aires, 1961), one of the most influential artists of his generation, known internationally for works that bring real life inside the spaces of art, achieved by the active intervention of the public and breaking down all barriers between the object and spectator. The exhibition at the Centro Pecci brings together three projects by the artist on the idea of the future and the need to question the fate of our planet and of humanity.

Tomorrow Is the Question, the large installation after which the exhibition is named, resurrects *Ping Pong Society*, a project by the Slovak artist Július Koller (1939-2007) presented for the first time in Bratislava in 1970. Koller installed ping-pong tables in an exhibition space and invited visitors to play. The aim was to involve and inspire people to move towards new opportunities for active thought, in this case aimed at reflection on the environment and cultural context. Retracing Koller's tracks, Tiravanija fills one of the rooms in the museum with ping pong tables, which are available to visitors, emblazoned with the text: "Tomorrow is the question." Inviting the public, who usually play a passive role, to become an active part of the exhibition by playing or encouraging others who are playing, Tiravanija, in his subtle and playful way, places human relations, exchange and participation at the heart of the "question about the future."

A work by Koller is also the inspiration for the second work presented at Centro Pecci, *Untitled (Remember JK, Universal Futurological Question Mark U. F. O.)*, a photograph of a group of people arranged to form a large question mark in the Carceri square of Prato. This is in fact the re-staging of *Universal Futurological Question Mark [U.F.O.]*, which Koller created in 1978, a photograph of a group of children in uniform forming a question mark on the side of a small hill. Tiravanija's remake contextualises Koller's work in a here and now that inevitably relates it to the present day which concerns us most, recalling the value of doubt and of asking questions about what is happening around us, but also inviting reflection on the relationship between the individual and the mass.

Tiravanija's last work in Prato is *Fear Eats the Soul*, the large flag that waves in front of the museum entrance. Produced for the Creative Time Pledges of Allegiance project, which required artists to come up with a design for a flag in the spirit of political resistance, Tiravanija's work recalls the title of the film by Rainer W. Fassbinder *Angst essen Seele auf*, which tells of the difficult love story between a German cleaner and a Moroccan mechanic, a relationship that brings out their deepest fears as much as the xenophobia and racism surrounding them. The work can be considered a manifesto, a programmatic enunciation valid for all of Rirkrit Tiravanija's work, which is an act of faith in the meaning of human relationships, reception, closeness to the other, like values that give meaning to our life and our future.

The son of a Thai diplomat, **Rirkrit Tiravanija** (Buenos Aires, 1961) has lived in many countries and completed his studies at the Ontario College of Art in Toronto, the Banff Center School of Fine Arts, the Art Institute of Chicago, and finally the Independent Study Program at Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. An exponent of the most representative of what Nicolas Bourriaud has defined as *relational aesthetics*, with explicit references to the conceptual and avant-garde trends of the Sixties and Seventies such as Fluxus, Tiravanija implements his work process of sharing, meeting and interaction with the public, often using daily activities such as cooking and consuming food together. Tiravanija has attended the Venice Biennale with his work several times and he has exhibited in the main international museums including the Guggenheim, MoMA, and Palais de Tokyo. In 2005 he won the Hugo Boss Prize.

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Opening Hours (from July the 1st till September the 1st): Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from 10 am till 8pm, Thursday and Friday from 10 am till 11 pm. Closed on Monday.

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