



HICKSTER PROJECTS

Localita Podere Poggio Boldrini, San Giovanni d'Asso, 53020 SI, Italia.
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Reality

Greig Burgoyne | Michele Tocca

Curated by Sue Kennington



Reality as it is treated by the realists, is nothing but a 'dechet de l'experience' according to Proust.

Beckett in his essay on Proust refers to Proust's contempt for the literature that 'describes', for the realists and naturalists worshipping the offal of experience, prostrate before the epidermis, and content to transcribe the surface, the facade, behind which the Idea is prisoner. According to Beckett, the Proustian procedure is in contrast, more that of Apollo flaying Marsyas and capturing without sentiment the essence, the Phrygian waters.

Hickster is pleased to announce an exhibition of two artists who are focusing on the skin of reality but arriving at this essence. One a painter – Michele Tocca, who looks face on at the visual world choosing his motifs from subjects as diverse as the mud lake he has to navigate to enter his studio in a semi flooded street in Rome or the view through his sunglasses of a landscape seen and painted by an earlier painter. The other, Greig Burgoyne, a performance artist and video maker, is dealing with the enduring problems of interaction with the physical world and strategies that confront the anxieties that bubble under its surface.



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Tocca's paintings are made 'sur le motif' – directly in front of his subject, with no mediation in the studio, those that fail, fail, but are never modified. His choice of subject matter, condensation forming on a windowpane, the tarmac of the road, the edge of a Roman tower against an azure sky, these paintings are invested with time, the time he spends in situ with his subject, but also the time between the current view and the past view – a stretch of time that has more to do with Proust's approach to time, and reality, than any hyper realism.

Greig Burgoyne, who will be performing on the evening, will also be showing a video from a piece he performed in a prison cell in 2016. Working with the futility and rapture of endurance, and in this particular case with a bad DIY effort - he is seen attempting to cover over a limitation – one that goes way beyond the literality of the prison cell, and is more about the reality of the human condition. Reality relating to Camus' essay on Sisyphus, which concludes, "The struggle itself ... is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy".



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The word *Reality* is understood, particularly today in Italy, to mean a genre of television programming that documents purportedly unscripted real-life situations. Fretting about whether this, photographic manipulation or social media addiction can distort our hold on 'reality', fades into irrelevance here, Burgoyne and Tocca are looking at a universal condition - reality as a lifeline for the condition of being human, a condition that is positioned so far beyond anything that could ever purport to be a simple state of existence connected to the physical. Essential reality.

Greig Burgoyne (Glasgow 1971)

Burgoyne studied at Hochschule Für Angewandte Kunst in Vienna & at the Royal College of Art, London (MA Painting 1994). He engages in an expansive site-specific drawing practice that embraces performance and installation. He unites materials, often sourced from the proximity the project, with process-led, rule-based strategies, which generate a condition of becoming, translation and flux; a site of experience rather than merely location. He has performed extensively in Europe since graduating from the Royal College. Recent commissions and performances include: *The First Night of Experimental Boredom* at Lodge 222 Dordrecht, Holland, 2019; *The One Who Was Standing Apart From Me* at Mart Gallery, Dublin 2018; *Celui Qui Ne M'Accompagnait Pas*, at Médiatèque Du Moulle, France 2018; *Yellow Brick Road 1 & 2* for P/ROPS Nest Space, Ghent, Belgium 2018; *PIER DIG* at ARTWalk Porty, Edinburgh 2018; *Restless Linings* at Wimbledon Space London 2018; *OK-NO* at La Confection Idéale, Tourcoing, France 2018, and *Breathing Space* with La Verita Dance Company at Centre Culturel, Balavoine, France.

Current projects in 2019 include *Brief Encounters* at the Edinburgh Arts Festival; and *Expect the Unexpected* at The Lowry Manchester (with Yoko Ono, Martin Creed and John Baldessari).

Michele Tocca (Rome 1983)

Rooted in a lineage of painters of phenomena and things, itinerant sketchers and landscapists, Michele Tocca's depictions elicit questions on the relationship between painting and the physical world with all the paradoxes implied in sur-le-vif ruminative, historical and imaginative dynamics. He holds an MA in Painting (2011) from the Royal College of Art, London. His work has been exhibited in museums, galleries and independent spaces, among which: 1/9unosunove gallery, Rome (2018); SHE WILL, Oslo (2018); Villa Vertua Masolo, Nova Milanese (2018); Francesco Pantaleone Gallery, Palermo (2015); Musei di Villa Torlonia, Rome (2015); Fuoricampo Gallery, Siena-Bruxelles (2014-2015); FLAG ART Foundation, New York (2014); Studiolo Project, Milan (2014); Museo del Paesaggio, Verbania Pallanza, (2013); MARCA, Catanzaro (2011); CIAC, Genazzano, Rome (2010); the Moscow Biennale, Moscow (2010); the Prague Biennale, Prague (2009); Otto Zoo Gallery Milan (2008). He has recently been selected for the residency Painting Project: Out Looking Inwards organized by painters Robert Bordo and Robert Holyhead at PRAKSIS, Oslo (2019). Writing projects include articles on Balthus, Carlo Carrà, James Ensor, Carlo Levi, Roberto Melli and Fausto Pirandello.