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MASS SPECTACLE

PRESS RELEASE

curated by Pietro Gaglianò

Dates | January 25th – March 23rd

Opening | January 25th at 6:00 pm

Exhibit hours | Monday – Saturday / 10 am – 1:30 pm & 2:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Eduardo Secci Contemporary is pleased to present the exhibition *Mass Spectacle* curated by Pietro Gaglianò, featuring the works by Victor Agius, Alberto Borea, Hugh Scott-Douglas, Diana Al Hadid, Santiago Taccetti, and Hector Zamora. The collective show will be inaugurated at the gallery's main exhibition spaces in Piazza Goldoni 2, Florence, on January 25th 2019, at 6:00 pm.

"The alignment of reality with the masses and of the masses with reality is a process of immeasurable importance for both thinking and perception."

The artworks of six international artists are displayed around this statement by Walter Benjamin (*The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction*, 1936) to illustrate a series of queries on form and on the sense of collective representations, on the role of art in its relationship with power. The project *Mass Spectacle / Spectacles for the Masses* is triggered by a contemplation on monuments set in the contemporary landscape and is displayed as a journey through the possible counter-narrations enacted by art questioning which one is its public and what are the limits of its effectiveness with regards to the economic system in which it is promoted and confined.

The artists involved are mainly from cultures that have been forced to face heavy colonial heritages or that find themselves in pivotal regions between conflicting continents and areas of influence, and their research is enriched by a critical view on the Westernized mass cultural production. **Victor Agius** (Malta, 1982, where he lives and works) reinterprets the traditional iconography of the religious devotion of politics, using materials that deteriorate the concept of permanence characterized by the monument. Deeply connected to the ancestral culture of his island, Agius carefully examines its roots and the evolutions in the relationship with the Mediterranean and Europe. **Alberto Borea** (Lima, 1979, lives and works in New York) works on a dramatic review of the fetishes of social repression and of the financial domain, denouncing its underground connections; the geographical borders of power are rewritten, unveiling ramifications from which nobody can avoid being held responsible. The work of **Hugh Scott-Douglas** (Cambridge, UK, 1988) explores the systems of the commercial production and distribution as a symbol of the contemporary global condition and as a tool to highlight other ways and journeys of

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human beings, languages, and meanings. The artist of Syrian origin **Diana Al Hadid** (1981, lives and works in New York), is working on an original experimentation in the technique and in the materials of sculpture, she deconstructs monumental representation by means of a formal research connecting the past and the present.

Argentinian **Santiago Taccetti** (lives and works in Buenos Aires) synthesizes the elements of social history of his country in forms that dialogue with different aesthetics of contemporary art: between simulations and challenges for the observer, a dry and dramatic narration of local and global inequalities is set. **Hector Zamora** (Mexico City, 1974, lives and works in Lisbon) is the author of large-format projects that overturn the customary apparatuses of perception between institution and counterculture, representation and imagination, artwork and spectator. The work presented for this occasion focuses on the fate of the work and on its permanence.

In the historical moment in which Benjamin's essay was published, in the Europe of totalitarianisms, the great narrations established themselves as mass spectacles, pursuing the precise political will of hegemonic groups of reaching endless crowds with their propaganda. Today, more than ever, in a global dimension consisting of the constant zeroing of history and instantaneous truths, the *Mass Spectacle* is an optic device: *Spectacles for the Masses*. In this correspondence, the link between representation and reality is described, deformed by those very *spectacles* imposed by representation.

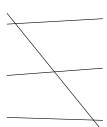
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