

Viola Yeşiltaç
bastard pears & barricades

02 November 2016 - 13 January 2017

visits by appointment

Press release

“Sie wissen nicht was sie tun, aber was ich tue, das glauben sie zu wissen”
“You don't know what you are doing, but you think you can tell what I am doing”

As part of the UNFINISHED CULTURE project, the Brodbeck Foundation is pleased to announce the opening of an exhibition by Viola Yeşiltaç, ***bastard pears & barricades***.

On this occasion, the New York-based German-Turkish artist is presenting a body of work comprising “drawings”, sculptures and a performance (with Oliver Input) devised during her period at her residency in Catania.

The title of the show alludes to a state of resistance and struggle that characterizes both the work of Yeşiltaç, and more widely, of a generation of contemporary artists who are taking a viewpoint that differs from the recent past. Dwelling upon timeless questions, revolving around what art, the role of the artist is today and what an artwork means. It is a vision that is no longer intimately connected with cognitive processes of cause and effect, hierarchical and imposed from above, but characterized by chaotic activities which come about independently and from the bottom up. This is the new context for the strand of experimentation pursued by the artist, who invariably develops her art beyond the canons defining the culture of the moment.

And it is precisely this that enables her to develop new work and consequently to define possible and new aesthetic rules a new vision of the world. In this sense the artist is more and more “ahead”, in a constant struggle between the rules dictated by knowledge and what her instinct demands she should reject and move beyond.

Yeşiltaç's drawings are the product of this inner conflict. Inks on the reverse of large fake leather canvases capture moments, sensations and visions. The fruit of a constant reflection between “style” and what the nature of the context suggests, what her intimate feelings propose. An almost calligraphic gesture to recount a nature able to overcome the resistance of a black and apparently dead stone; the sponge technique to render the end-of-summer sky; the spray technique to imagine a Mediterranean which is much more than the recent tragedies; poured paint to feel the heat of lava, the brush to describe organic matter in a continual state of becoming. A repertoire of heterogeneous actions in a perennial struggle with the rules and habits of a world where stylistic distinguishability is an element that has been indispensable up till now, but which often encloses the artist within an apathetic and impenetrable golden cage.

It is an art that in any case always moves between high and low culture. In fact the concerns suggested from below are always compared with what art has rendered eternal. Like Giancarlo

Piretti's chair in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art NYC, and which has always had a place in Yeşiltaç's imagination. It is presented here set into the lava, perhaps as a metaphor of expressive freedom and at the same time, as a symbol that history hands down and shows to be ever contemporary.

In Catania the autumnal fruit of the prickly pear is called a ***bastardo***, so named to distinguish it from the one produced during the first flowering in spring. A ***bastardo*** is bigger, succulent and sweet, born from an abortion, from a traumatic and unnatural act, but the fruit of experience and intuition.

Viola Yeşiltaç is currently living and working in New York City and has had recent solo shows at C L E A R I N G, Brussels; David Lewis, New York; The Cooper Gallery, University of Dundee, Scotland. She has been included in group exhibitions including Modern Art Oxford, Oxford UK; The Kitchen NYC; Extra City Kunsthal, Antwerpen; 30th Sao Pãolo Biennale and those at Dominique Lévy, New York; Campoli Presti, London/Paris; Moran Bondaroff Gallery, Los Angeles; i8 Gallery Reykjavik, Iceland; Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle; Bundeskunstshalle, Bonn; Sculpture Center, New York amongst many others.