

PRESS RELEASE

«Antidotes and their Counterparts»

Gaia Fugazza | Haroon Mirza

Opening: Thursday, October 24, 2019 | 6 – 8 pm
Artists talk with Giovanni Carmine
Director Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen | 7 pm

Exhibition: until January 17, 2020

Häusler Contemporary Zürich is pleased to present for the first time a double exhibition of native Italian artist Gaia Fugazza and Pakistani-British artist Haroon Mirza. In different ways both their works combine contemporary and primeval processes with natural and man-made materials, thus opening up a multi-layered space for reflection on humanity within the world.

Electronic equipment and organic substances, geometric structures and archaic-figurative-looking imagery – at first glance, the encounter of the works of Gaia Fugazza and Haroon Mirza seem contradictory and diverse. It is the first time that the artists, who are also a couple, are showing together in a two-person exhibition, and we are delighted that Häusler Contemporary Zürich provides the setting for this exclusive artistic dialogue. In doing so, we open up a space for the parallel consideration of these two very distinct oeuvres, both of which raise questions about the world we inhabit, from the anthropocene to quantum electrodynamics.

Haroon Mirza (*1977, London, UK, lives in London) has presented works in several of our group exhibitions since 2018. He is internationally known for his installations in which he uses electricity to orchestrate light, sound and objects into sensory multi-layered experiences. Mirza's use of non-art specific materials and techniques ties in with the post-modern discourse of our gallery program: old furniture or other discarded everyday objects are often part of his pallet and, in recent years, solar panels, stones or psychoactive plants have widened the range of his «ingredients».

The latter also play a role in our show in which we see copper plates, normally used for making electrical circuits, that have instead been treated respectively with spores of psychoactive mushrooms, the acidity of cherry stones, crystallizing sugar and electro-etched ginger. With the substances he uses for these «Copper Works», Mirza proposes that the only distinction between a plant, a food, a medicine and a narcotic is mostly how we collectively categorize them. Furthermore he presents LED light works based on the square – an art-historical highly charged form. The red, green and blue light shows us the astonishing essence of the RGB color space: the interaction of the different colors on the opposite wall results in a white glow illuminating Gaia Fugazza's works.

Häusler Contemporary Zürich
Stampfenbachstrasse 59
CH-8006 Zürich

Telefon 0041 43 810 04 26
zuerich@haeusler-contemporary.com
www.haeusler-contemporary.com

Gaia Fugazza (*1985, Milan, IT, lives in London) reflects in her paintings and performances the connection between human beings and the natural environment, flora's intelligence, reproduction and transcendental experience. The woman, for example, who often appears as a protagonist in her paintings, represents a «primal» mother as well as a contemporary subject with a multiple division of roles. Formally her works are reminiscent of cave paintings, yet the hybrid characters interact with a natural and technological world. The materials that Fugazza uses for her haptic appealing work, in turn again convey ideas of originality and closeness to nature: they are carved, burned, waxed or painted with self-made mineral paints.

At Häusler Contemporary, Fugazza presents some of the first works she created using this technique, along with new works. They contextualize the supposed dominance of humanity. A large triptych for example revolves around the history of contraception, in which the ancestresses of alternative medicine were overthrown by modern Cartesian medicine. Two other paintings combine veganism and invasive plants which have flourished in cities through globalization.

Thus, our exhibition shows how Gaia Fugazza and Haroon Mirza each refer differently to the contemporary world, offering bridges between the technologized present and primal knowledge. It is an exhibition that addresses both the intellect and all our different senses.

Deborah Keller

Haroon Mirza became known internationally when he won the 2011 Silver Lion at the Venice Biennale. His work is exhibited globally, for example at Ikon Gallery Birmingham (2018), Museum Tinguely in Basel (2015), or The New Museum, New York (2012). In 2018 he completed a residency at CERN in Geneva. His work is present in renowned collections such as Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, the Zabłudowicz Collection, London, The National Museum of Liverpool, The British Council, The Arts Council of England.

Gaia Fugazza is an emerging artist who has shown her work internationally in group exhibitions in the Baltic Triennial 13, London, Glasstress Venice, Tinguely Museum, Basel, Whitechapel Gallery, London. She has had recent solo show at Galleriapiù, Bologna, or at Zabłudowicz Collection, London. The latter as well as the Deutsche Bank Collection and others own works of Fugazza.

**Don't hesitate to contact us for further information:
+41 43 810 04 26, zuerich@haeusler-contemporary.com**