

Press Release

Luca Francesconi

Hormone Disruptors

Opening reception: Saturday March 6th, 2021 from 11 am to 9 pm

Duration: until 24 May 2021

Exhibition space: Galleria Umberto Di Marino - Via Alabardieri 1, 80121, Napoli

Opening hours: Monday - Saturday 3 pm / 7 pm - by appointment in the morning

Galleria Umberto Di Marino is delighted to present Luca Francesconi's fourth solo exhibition, *Hormone Disruptors*, on Saturday March 6th, 2021.

The new project is part of the artist's research around traditional agriculture and, more recently, on food production closely connected to the concept of cultivation. Through a new cycle of sculptures, Luca Francesconi proceeds with an analysis on the theme of gender identity, focusing the attention on the exposure to phytosanitary treatments that humans have tested in recent years.

However, if on one hand synthetic molecules have exponentially multiplied crop yields, shaping the contemporary idea of "food overproduction," on the other hand for the first time in history we are starting to question the long-term effects of chemistry in agriculture.

The identification of Endocrine disruptors¹, known as the active ingredients present in agricultural treatments that can change the production of hormones and hence the "normal" sexual development in complex organisms², has gradually caused a modification of human metabolism initiated by the agro-pharmaceutical industry.

This "interference," when applied to predisposed individuals, has an effective role in the redefinition of gender identity. Today we are organisms with a modified biological rhythm and, ironically, we could define ourselves no longer as men, women, or even hybrid entities, but as transsexuals in the most technical and anti-rhetorical meaning of the term.

At the same time, sterility is setting up to be a significant problem in the Western world, and the social motivations alone are not sufficient to explain the impressive population growth imbalance on the planet. Once again, this difference resembles witchcraft. More likely, the real reasons for these changes are in the exposure to mutagenic agents, which are modifying the chemical structure of our bodies, working on human biology itself.

In this new project, Luca Francesconi's analysis avoids a simplistic demonization of scientific progress and a utopian "return to the past." The artist's investigation, starting from the ground-up, does not want to be a laboratory experiment aimed to reach an objective and universal conclusion. Instead, questioning eschatological faith in the progress, Francesconi tries to show the complexities and contradictions generated by the transposition of agricultural and food models in an "other" context.

¹ Endocrine disruptors, sometimes also referred to as *endocrine disrupting compounds*, are chemicals that can interfere with endocrine (or hormonal) systems. These disruptions can cause cancerous tumors, birth defects, and other developmental disorders. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Endocrine_disruptor

² Endocrine-disrupting compounds have the potential to perturb sensitive hormone pathways that regulate reproductive functions. In fish, this may result in decreased fertility and egg production in females, and reduced gonad size or feminization of genetic male fish. In: Lisa D. Arcand-Hoy e William H. Benson, *Fish reproduction: An ecologically relevant indicator of endocrine disruption*, 2009 <https://setac.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/etc.5620170108>

Luca Francesconi (Mantova, 1979) lives and works in Mantova (IT).

He has participated in numerous exhibitions in public and private spaces such as: Fondazione Ratti - Como (2000), Biennale di Tirana - Tirana (2001), Fuori Uso - Pescara (2004), Galleria Civica di Trento - Trento (2004), Cristina Guerra Gallery - Lisbon (2006), Maison Populaire - Montreuil (2007), Palais de Tokyo - Paris (2009), Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo - Turin, Crac Alsace - Altkirch, Magasin - Grenoble, Fluxia - Milan (2010), Mot - Bruxelles, Chez Valentin - Paris (2011), Musées de Montbéliard - Montbéliard, Arte Nova-Art Basel - Miami (2012), Man - Nuoro, Museo Marino Marini - Florence (2013), Shanaynay - Paris (2014), Tonus - Paris, Museo Riso - Palermo, Kunsthalle Lissabon - Lisbon (2015), JupiterWoods - London, Tunnel Tunnel - Losanne (2016), *une, une, une* with Miriam Cahn - Perpignan, Spazio Maria Calderara with Vettor Pisani - Milan (2017), *67 Steps* - Los Angeles (2018), Palazzo delle Esposizioni - Rome (2019). In 2009 he won the "*Illy Present / Future*" with the gallery Umberto Di Marino, awarded by Alexis Vaillant, Hans-Ulrich Obrist e Jens Hoffman, during Artissima, Turin. In 2011 has been invited by Bice Curiger at "*Illumination*", 54th Venice Biennial In 2014 Giovanni Carmine, the director of Kunsthalle Sant Gallen, and Alexis Vaillant, chief curator of CAPC-Bordeaux invited him at the section "*THENnow*" of the *Miart* fair, with a project realized in collaboration with Jimmie Durham. In 2016 he participated in XXV edition of *Premio Nazionale Arti Visive Città di Gallarate*, Museo MAGA. In 2020 he was part of *AGAINandAGAINandAGAINand*, a group show curated by Lorenzo Balbi at MAMbo, Bologna. In 2021 he will realize his first solo show at Galeria Pedro Cera – Lisbon and a new project at Museo Burel - Belluno

Between 2008 and 2010 he has co-directed *Brown project space* in Milano.

He actively works with Umberto Di Marino Gallery since 2006, realizing three solo shows: *A naked tree and some other works* (2006), *Calendario delle Semine* (2009) and *pane pane pane vino canale di scolo*, curated by Jason Hwang (2014).