

YOAN CAPOTE
RESONANCIAS
KAN XUAN
NEW MIDDLE CLASS
05-11-2023
03-12-2023
CURATED BY
SERGEY KANTSEDAL
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Associazione Barriera invites Galleria Continua to present two new solo shows, *Resonancias* by Yoan Capote, and *New Middle Class* by Kan Xuan, opening at Associazione Barriera in Turin, during the 2023 edition of Artissima.

The artistic practice of Yoan Capote, born in 1977 in Cuba, encompasses a variety of media such as sculpture, painting, drawing, video, installation, and public art, and explores the relationship between the individual and the collective. Taking a visionary approach, he draws inspiration primarily from his everyday living environment. Using common objects and materials, he creates artworks that reveal the surprising interconnectedness between individual and community, culture and society.

The works presented in Turin, which serve as an organic synthesis of Capote's artistic research over the past decades, resonate strongly with our contemporary society and evoke fundamental issues such as life and death, resilience and power. Unpublished artworks are juxtaposed with older pieces, inviting the public to reflect on freedom of expression and censorship, personal identification, and media propaganda.

The theme of physicality, and thus also of the body, which in the artist's interpretation takes on a bio-political meaning and value, is both the subject and ob-

ject of the exhibition. The show begins with *Demagogia*, one of the artist's best-known works from the 1990s: a usable washbasin in the shape of an ear. Other works refer to the body or posture, including *Abstinencia* – gestures made using sign language compose a word through a sculptural sequence – and *Paranoia*, in which human profiles emerge from metal bars, a reference to the restriction of personal freedom.

A series of works – including *Impunidad* and *Lacerating my silence* – is dedicated to voice, understood as an extension of the body, in which the artist develops the theme of the emancipated power of speech and language.

The exhibition closes with a series of works of a more nostalgic nature. *Purification*, *Requiem (dibujo)*, and works from the *Isla* series among the most celebrated by the artist, evoke the sea, a subject that has a profoundly ambiguous meaning in the history of his country. Despite the aesthetically pleasing landscapes, the works present a catastrophic and almost apocalyptic dimension and scenario, being tragically linked to the imagery of immigration.

While referencing a specific social and historical context and territory such as Cuba, the artist portrays social conflict as an existential issue, incorporating it, through strong political references, into a universal discourse that resonates across different and distant contexts, times, and spaces.

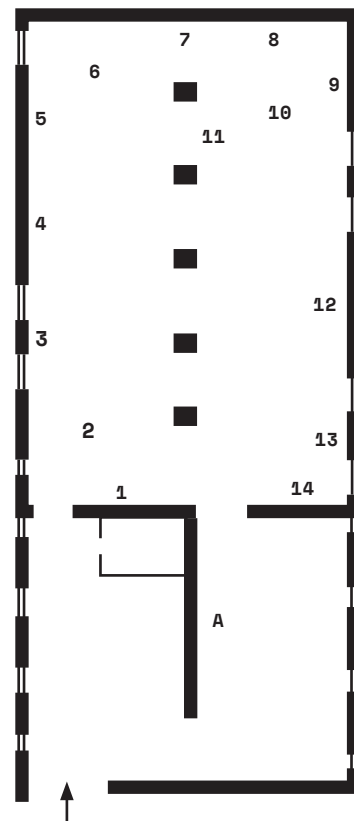
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The practice of Kan Xuan – one of the most influential Chinese artists of her generation – emerged on the global scene in the mid-2000s. Xuan has been particularly appreciated for her ability to communicate presence, the “here and now,” which is a fundamental concept within her main theme of investigation: the materiality and fragility of substance and existence. In the video, as well as throughout her entire body of work, artistic interest goes beyond the exploration of the object itself and becomes a pretext for reflecting on representation itself, alongside its ideological and narrative superstructures. The social and political aspect addressed is never explicit but emerges from the tension between individual subjectivity and the world. Themes such as globalisation, commodification, and consumerism, which characterise the increasingly massified and centripetal neoliberal society, arise from a reflection that is always and above all personal.

For her exhibition at Associazione Barriera, Kan Xuan presents *New Middle Class* (2018), a video in which various metal washers are threaded onto a rotating industrial bar. The gentle tinkling and the falling of the washers convey vibrant emotions and recalls the new middle class and their alienation in the entertainment industry. This and other works of the same period, are influenced by the artist's firsthand experience in the commercial sector. The constant exposure to major brands has pushed her practice towards new and unexplored territories and languages. Similar to commercials, where criticism is never overt and assertive, the artist attempts to raise awareness among the audience through the ritual, ethics, and aesthetics of the corporate world. Once again, Kan Xuan's art conveys, through a simple and effective language, an immediate sense of being and living. Authentic experiences in which aesthetics serve as a vehicle to read and interpret life and community.

- 1 Yoan Capote, *Demagogy*, 2010 – 2011
bronze, polished bronze and chrome,
45 × 60 × 37 cm
- 2 Yoan Capote, *Impunidad*, 2020
microphones with daggers on a bronze base,
47 × 34 × 22 cm
- 3 Yoan Capote, *Isla (solipsismo)*, 2023,
oil, nails and fish-hooks on linen and wooden panel,
73,5 × 94 × 9 cm
- 4 Yoan Capote, *Speechless*, 2019
bronze and paper tissues, life size faces,
12,5 × 13 × 19 cm (each)
- 5 Yoan Capote, *Paranoia*, 2008,
forged steel,
152 × 144 × 21,5 cm
- 6 Yoan Capote, *Deriva (elegía)*, 2023
steel and ashes of remains found in the sea,
12 × 200 × 23
- 7 Yoan Capote, *Purification*, 2023,
video, 11 min
- 8 Yoan Capote, from the series *Purification*, 2023,
plaster, wires and recycled metals on jute panel
mounted on plywood, 180 × 200 cm

- 9 Yoan Capote, *Abstinencia (tolerancia)*, 2022
bronze, variable dimensions
- 10 Yoan Capote, *Penitencia (isla)*, 2023, Mahogany kneeler,
bronze and reef stone from Cuban coastline,
86 × 53 × 51 cm
- 11 Yoan Capote, *Laboratorio*, 2012
gelatin-silver print on glass, showcase,
variable dimensions
- 12 Yoan Capote, *Isla (solos)*, 2023
oil, nails and fishhooks on linen mounted on wooden panel,
180 × 352 × 14 cm
- 13 Yoan Capote, *Requiem (dibujo)*, 2023
collective blood, sea water and 24k goldleaf,
56 × 76 cm
- 14 Yoan Capote, *Lacerating (my silence)*, 2003–2013
sharp laser-cut stainless steel on a wooden base,
90 × 180 × 30 cm
- A Kan Xuan, *New Middle Class*, 2018,
video installazione
3 min 27 sec



barriera

GALLERIACONTINUA
SAN GIPRIGNANO BEZZANO LES MOULINS AIGERES ROMA SUD PAULY PARIS DUBAI

Fondazione CRT

Barriera is a non-profit association for contemporary art founded in Turin in 2007 by a group of art collectors. Through a series of initiatives, exhibitions and events, this art space creates opportunities for dialogue between artists, curators and collectors and engenders contaminations with other cultural environments. Barriera promotes curatorial strategies that encourage young artists to continue and widen their research while orienting it, through a sharing process, towards a production fed by the site specificities.

Barriera is curated by Sergey Kantsedal and Yuliya Say.

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