



BENAPPI  
ARTE ANTICA E MODERNA

## **FIGURES OF DESIRE**

**Mutant subjectivity in the artistic research of**

**Sonia Ros and Katja Kotikoski**

***Genoa, Palazzo Ducale, Sala Liguria Spazio Aperto - June 19th – July 14th***

***Turin, Benappi Arte Antica – September 19th – October 19th***

***Rome, Institutum Romanum Finlandiae – November 2th - December 20th***

Project curated by Afrodite Oikonomidou and Roberto Mastroianni

Exhibition produced by Benappi Arte Antica e Moderna – Umberto Benappi

### **The project**

FIGURES OF DESIRE is an exhibition project born from the encounter between the Benappi Gallery in Turin (present in the Ancient Art market since four generations and actually dealing also with Modern and Contemporary Art) and two artists of different background and nationality: Sonia Ros, Italian, and Katja Kotikoski, Finland. This two-women show aims to stage a feminine artistic research of international level which interrogates, through painting and sculpture, on the "in-forming" nature of desire, its metamorphic character and its anthropological value.



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The exhibition, produced by Benappi Gallery with the partnership of the Finnish Embassy in Italy, the Ligurian Regional Foundation for Culture and Performing Arts and the Finnish Cultural Foundation, intends presenting an insight of the international art scene, through the encounter and dialogue between two apparently different geographical and cultural contexts (the Baltic and the Mediterranean, the northern and southern Europe), but in truth similar as they both focus on research and artistic innovation.

## Figures of desire

Some artists make of desire and its ability to "shape the world" the main theme of their work: this is the case of Sonia Ros and Katja Kotikoski. In fact, their artistic research is meant, in a different but complementary way, to investigate the relationship between desire, reality and humanity, staging the "figures of desire" seen from opposite points of view in some cases and coinciding in others. It is not just the expressive technique chosen by the two artists (for one of them sculpture, while painting for the other) to be different and complementary in this exhibition, it is the regime of the gaze that investigates the phenomenon and captures different moments of the relationship between subject, world and desire. The production of the two artists attempts to give substance to this encounter with the object/subject that satisfies the desire and its effects starting from different points. Katja Kotikoski is interested in representing the narrative impact produced by the desiring force in the world, through the sinuous and swathing sculptures that, in her words, present themselves as "*little stories or figurative poems*", who speak the body language, while Sonia Ros is interested in representing the moment when desire meets reality, using an anti-narrative way and through a sophisticated and refined painting.



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In both cases, we are witnessing an "Epiphany of the Body" produced by the representation of the corporeal, meant as the space in which the flow of desires take shape. In one case, the bodies are metamorphic and plural "desiring machines", the focal point of instincts and sensual energy, able to integrate organic and inorganic (Ros); in the other case, the bodies are "figures of narration" deriving from the individual and collective imagination moved by desire (Kotikoski). The big paintings of the Venetian artist enact anti-iconic images, that in a rather graphic representation lead to the easing of bodies, their explosion/implosion and their integration with the object of desire, be it organic or inorganic. The sculptures of the Finnish artist show surfaces and lines that resemble human skin, almost trying to reproduce bodily figures as abstract as concrete, which give rise to a narrative material and archetypal traits. Together, these two artists of different education and geographical context, create a dialogue on the nature of the body, of desire and imagination and their productive power.

### **Sonia Ros**

Sonia Ros was born in Conegliano, in the Venice Region. She graduated at the Venice Fine Art Academy, studying Painting with Maurizio Martelli, Luca Bendini and Carlo Maschietto. She started exhibiting in 2001 with solo or group shows in Italy and abroad (Argentina, UK, Slovenia, Germany, Russia, Finland, Bulgaria). Her works can be found in many private collections. She currently lives and works between Venice and Vittorio Veneto.

### **Katja Kotikoski**

Ceramic artist Katja Kotikoski was born in 1973, in Espoo, Finland. In 2008 she got her Bachelor's degree in Ceramic and Glass Design from the Aalto University, School of Art and Design, Helsinki and graduated as Master of Arts from Aalto University's program of Applied Art and Design in 2011. She has participated in group exhibitions since 2006. Her work has been shown in Finland, Estonia, Denmark, Ireland, UK and Shanghai, China. Parallel to her artistic activity she also teaches ceramics. Her works can be found in the Finnish State Art Collection. She lives and works in Helsinki.



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### Info:

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Venue: Sala Liguria Spazio Aperto

Palazzo Ducale, Piazza Matteotti 9, Genoa

Press preview and catalogue presentation: June 19th, h. 11.30 am.

Vernissage: June 19th, h. 6.00 pm.

Opening hours: Monday through Friday 9.00 am. – 7.00 pm.

Saturday and Sunday 2.00 pm. – 7.00 pm.

### Contacts:

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