



PUBLIC SERVICE

Disrupted Harmony
curated by Edoardo Monti
05.10.2023—17.11.2023

Brianna Rose Brooks
Miranda Forrester
David Gardner
Delphine Hennelly
Eliza Hopewell
Konstantina Krikzoni
Anya Paintsil

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Disrupted Harmony invites us to embark on a journey through the intricate interplay of chaos and order, where imbalance and equilibrium coalesce to form a tapestry of visual and emotional experiences. This collection of artworks, whose common thread is identified in their creators' residency at Palazzo Monti in Brescia (Italy), seeks to challenge our conventional notions of harmony, by embracing disruption as an essential component of artistic expression.

In a world that often craves stability and balance, artists have long explored the fertile ground where discord disrupts harmony, pushing the boundaries of creativity and meaning. The exhibition brings together a diverse range of works that delve into this paradoxical relationship, inviting viewers to ponder the intricate dance between chaos and order in our lives. A variety of mediums, from textiles to acrylic and oil on canvas, celebrates a joyful ballet: a choreography composed of 7 artists from different countries and with strong personal stories.

Through the use of fibers, unexpected textures, and geometric dissonance, Welsh-Ghanaian artist Anya Paintsil (b. 1993) challenges our preconceptions of order and symmetry within the realm of tapestry. The usual rigor and stiffness engaged in the process that gives life to carpets and patterns is abandoned, and the approach is much more improvised. From rug hooking to embroidery, her assemblages evoke tactile tapestry on the one hand, and constitute semi-sculptural interventions on the other. Playful and profound, flippant and forceful, her practice engages the language of fibers — of all kinds — with interrogations of materiality and political personhood.

Nature's Chaos delves into the wild, untamed beauty of the natural world. Here, artists capture the unpredictable and unruly forces of nature, celebrating the inherent chaos of the natural world while reminding us of our own fragility in the face of such power. Konstantina Krikzoni (b. 1987) works around the expressive potential of the female body, highlighting its capacity for action and its enigmatic repository of secrets, arcane knowledge, and experiences. Through her paintings, she delves into personal and collective memories, often referencing private or forgotten moments that unveil the specter of personal or shared traumas. Themes such as abjection, excess, veiled eroticism, and the unsettling otherness that disrupts the self are recurrent in her creations. Krikzoni's paintings are bodily events. Her movements inscribe stories of physical encounters on the canvas, encouraging viewers to immerse themselves in the interplay between corporeal and co-vexing dimensions. The performativity during her process often includes props, such as flowers in her most recent works, that convey dualities. Her intention is to foment and explore the tensions that arise between the corporeal and the cerebral, the material and the immaterial, the human and the inhuman, the human and its animal-familiar.

Often, artists explore the emotional turbulence that disrupts our inner harmony. Through vivid and evocative works, they depict the complexities of human emotions, from the tumultuous depths of despair to the soaring heights of joy. These pieces invite viewers to confront their own emotional landscapes and reflect on the paradoxical beauty of inner discord. Born in 1979, Delphine Hennelly lives and works in Montreal. Through her use of pattern, repetition, and uncanny color palettes, Hennelly's work addresses prescribed gender roles, immediacy of painting, and the human condition. Drawing is a key component of the work. By welding the concept with form, Hennelly leans towards bending the nature of the paint to fulfill a graphic need mimicking techniques of reproduction, the print, paper, ink and the doodle. Inspiration for the artist's work includes tapestries, art history, and early Modernism.

We dive into a sea of images that come from ideas and experiences around queerness, rituals, meditation, dreams, transcendence and the universal connectivity between everything corporeal and beyond. The spaces in David Gardner's (b. 1987) pictures are generously filled up by the presence, energy and spirit of the human figure: A figuration that searches beyond the parameters of the canvas and paper; yearning to be liberated from the frame; investigating that other place beyond the senses and all that is tangible in this world. David uses his own body and

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flesh as the subject in his paintings and drawings, alongside observed and imagined flora and landscapes. David's gaze is mostly introverted and directed inward, investigating that vast inner landscape that many call 'the Soul'.

The concept of *Disrupted Harmony* extends beyond the individual to the collective. We introduce Brianna Rose Brooks (b. 1997), whose works grapple with the disruption of societal norms, challenging the status quo and confronting pressing issues. From powerful protest art to thought-provoking commentary on contemporary events, these pieces demand that we question the systems that govern our lives. The American artist's work investigates themes of black representation, love and vulnerability, as they continually shift through public and private memory and thought. Often manifested in the emotionally charged nonlinear space of a diary or journal, the work incorporates abstract narratives and microcosmic allegories of adolescence, intimacy, and self-reflection, as well as more formidable and antagonistic sentiments of anger, fear, longing, and dependence.

The journey follows into a practice that addresses the invisibility of Black women in the western history of art. Miranda Forrester (b. 1997), based in London, explores the queer Black female gaze in painting vis-à-vis the history of men painting women naked. She investigates how painting is able to re-articulate the language and history of life drawing through a queer Black feminist and desiring lens. In doing so, she depicts what the male gaze may not be able to see. Exploring the significance of domestic environments for queer people, Forrester's paintings capture intimate, insular moments of warmth and tenderness. Animating large expanses of emptiness with vibrant, fluid and assertive lines, her bold figures occupy their space with authority yet subtlety, speaking to the strength in vulnerability. Lines and translucent brush strokes roam across her paintings, often spilling onto the wall behind and around the stretcher, gathering complex and shifting observations into the nature of identity. The work, altogether, is a celebration of women's bodies, of queerness and blackness, the joy in occupying feminine identities and being in relation with one another.

In a journey where we explore the delicate equilibrium that exists between order and chaos in our lives, at last we encounter Eliza Hopewell (b. 1994), a South London based artist who works across painting, ceramics, printmaking and film. Hopewell's work is concerned with challenging the societal view of women and femmes through subverting objects and spaces that are typically associated with them. Exploring the difference between private and public selves, and drawing on cinema and literature, her work tells nuanced and sensitive stories of femininity. Blending history and the present-day, Hopewell provides us with images of women filtered through a contemporary lens, creating pictures with both mythological and Biblical influences.

Let us embrace disruption as a source of inspiration and creativity, challenging ourselves in order to see harmony in a new light. As we navigate the complexities of our world, we must remember that disruption can be a catalyst for growth, innovation, and deeper understanding. In embracing the disrupted harmony of our existence, we find new avenues for creativity and connection.

— Edoardo Monti —

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About the Curator

Born in Bergamo in 1991, Edoardo Monti moved abroad in 2011, first to London to study Art and Design, followed by New York, where he ends up working for Stella McCartney for 8 years. After a career in the fashion world, Monti decides to focus on contemporary art and applies the skills acquired over the years living and working abroad to his own region in Italy, Lombardia, while building bridges between artists, artisans and institutions all over the world. Palazzo Monti, a cultural center and artist residency based in Brescia, is launched in March 2017.

In addition to being the founder of Palazzo Monti, Edoardo is also a vivid art collector and curator. In the past 6 years, he has curated over 30 exhibitions at Palazzo Monti, and others at multiple galleries and institutions, amongst which *Fluuuuido* at Cassina Projects in Milan (2022); solo shows by Daria Dmytrenko, Marco De Sanctis and Bea Bonafini at Eduardo Secci in Florence (2021-2022); Harrison Pearce at Ribot Gallery, Milan (2021); *Transatlantico* at Mana Contemporary, in Jersey City, (2020) and *Damnatio Memoriae* for the Flag Art Foundation, New York (2020).

Monti sits on the board of several institutions including GAMeC Club and the Italian Art Trust. He is part of the selection committee of the Collectible Design Fair in Brussels and Archiproducts Awards in Milan, and is in charge of the VIP and digital strategy for ArtVerona. Monti is also the director of Belle Arti, a cultural association chaired by Massimo Minini.