

# GALLERIA RAFFAELLA CORTESE

## PRESS RELEASE

### MONICA BONVICINI OUR HOUSE

via a. stradella 7 - 1 - 4

**opening reception with the artist thursday march 23rd, h. 19.00 - 21.00**

**march 24th | april 26th 2017**

**tuesday – saturday h. 10.00-13.00 | 15.00-19.30 and by appointment**

Galleria Raffaella Cortese is pleased to present Monica Bonvicini's first exhibition at the gallery. The show is spread across all three exhibition spaces and displays works conceived and produced specifically for the exhibition.

Monica Bonvicini is known for her large sculptural installations, and is also an artist with a complex and complete artistic activity, which includes different media, from drawings to video installations and photography. She studied art in Berlin and at Cal Arts, Valencia, CA. Since 2003 Bonvicini holds a position as Professor for Performative Arts and Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. She lives and works in Berlin. Her research has always been formed around the concept of architecture and its history as a language able to unify political, economical and social issues. From the 90s she confronted architecture from a gender theory point of view, with the wittiness that always characterizes her works.

For the show *Our House* she is literally taking apart the private walls of dwellings in a series of large black and white drawings based on the destruction caused by climate change, from wildfires to hurricanes. The works refer to the concept of Capitalocene formalized in the theories of Donna Haraway, feminist exponent researching the relationship between science and gender identity. The images are taken from online publications where it is stated that many of the natural disasters are caused by an abusive ecological behaviour perpetrated by mankind. Together with the drawings, the main gallery space features the *Diener* sculptures and the video *Slamshut*. Produced in 2017, the *Diener* sculptures are covered readymades that turn into something reminiscent of clothes stands. Peculiarly leaning on the wall, these body-sized sculptures are actually braces for concrete walls. Specifically produced in and around Milan, these sculptures embrace the handcrafts tradition rooted in one of the most fashionable and experimental design cities of Europe. A tool for construction is transformed into an eccentric yet domesticated object of design.

A new series of wall works, four prints on frame that take inspiration from the book *Testo junkie. Sexe, drogue et biopolitique* by Paul B. Preciado, is presented in Via Stradella n.1. The works, unusually colourful for Bonvicini's standards, consist of prints of a multitude of cuts-out of body parts taken from scrap magazines and tabloids. In the resulting composition every sexual reference vanishes and a vivid analysis emerges underlining how pleasure and body parts are considered commodification objects. Each one of the four works shows a pink-sprayed portion of the sentence "I like to stand with one leg on each side of the wall" taken from the text *The German Issue* by Heiner Müller.

Bonvicini has recently returned to exploring the sociology of walls that, in this show, embraces both private and institutional structures. The artist has been working with walls since her days as a student at Cal Arts, and has produced pieces such as the large architectural intervention *I Muri* (1991), *verbrauchte nostalgie* (1993), and *Wallfuckin'* (1996), just to name a few. In one of the three exhibition spaces, a large-sized exhibition wall is held up from one side by a chain. *Structural Psychodrama # 3* (2017) features a minimal intervention into the space through the use of building material. The dramatization and the role-playing reflect the institutional codex of behaviour associated with the walls of a gallery, both as a place to display art and one to see and understand it.

Bonvicini has won a number of awards, including the Golden Lion at the Biennale di Venezia (1999), the Preis der Nationalgalerie für junge Kunst, from the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (2005), and the Rolandpreis für Kunst for art in the public from the Foundation Bremen, Germany (2013). Her work has been featured in many prominent biennials, including Berlin (1998, 2003, 2014), La Triennale Paris (2012), Istanbul (2003), Gwangju (2006), New Orleans (2008), and Venice (1999, 2001, 2005, 2011, 2015). She has had solo exhibitions at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris (2002), Modern Art Oxford, England (2003), Secession, Vienna (2003), Staedtisches Museum Abteiberg (2005, 2012), Sculpture Center (2007), the Art Institute of Chicago (2009), the Kunstmuseum Basel (2009), Frac des Pays de la Loire (2009), the Kunsthalle Fridericianum in Kassel (2011), Centro de Arte Contemporaneo de Málaga, Spain (2011), and the Deichtorhallen Hamburg (2012), Kunsthalle Mainz (2013), BALTIC Center for Contemporary Art (2016/17).

For further informations contact Nicla Calegari +39 02 2043555, [info@galleriaraffaellacortese.com](mailto:info@galleriaraffaellacortese.com).

#### GALLERIA RAFFAELLA CORTESE

via a. stradella 7

via a. stradella 1 via a. stradella 4

20129 milano italia

t +39 02 2043555 f +39 02 29533590

[info@galleriaraffaellacortese.com](mailto:info@galleriaraffaellacortese.com)

[www.galleriaraffaellacortese.com](http://www.galleriaraffaellacortese.com)

nazgol ansarinia

francesco arena

silvia bächli

mirosław bałka

yael bartana

karla black

barbara bloom

monica bonvicini

alejandro cesarco

keren cytter

michael fliri

jitka hanzlová

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william e. jones

kimsooja

zoe leonard

anna maria maiolino

marcello maloberti

ana mendieta

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martha rosler

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