

A as Stone

curated by

Marianne Lanavère & Simone Menegoi

Alis / Filliol

Rodolphe Delaunay

Adrien Missika

Bettina Samson

opening: **saturday 2nd October 2010** via Amati 13, Pistoia h. 18.00
from Monday to Friday 15.30 - 19.30 or on appointment, until 30th November 2010

>> Press Release

SpazioA gallery opens on **saturday 2nd October 2010, h 18.00**, the first show of the season, a project curated by **Marianne Lanavère** and **Simone Menegoi**.

Halfway up the wall of a sandpit located in Île-de-France, sandstone concretions can be seen. They resemble both the palms of human hands and the palms that grow in the tropics, both half-opened human hands and furled fronds. At irregular intervals, facing the same direction, they are aligned in a broken horizontal layer.

The longest appear to be made of some fluid or crumbly material abruptly hardened by frost and then punctured here and there by the obstinacy of the same type of wear that scoured both sides of the surface offered to the point of perforating its weakest part. A play of forces with time on its side heaped up and changed, thickened and sharpened these mysterious, perfect rock masses that reveal their laws, labelling and authenticating their necessity. Other rock masses, more powerfully convex, raise an efficient shield against an invisible pressure. Yet others, narrowing or tapering at the rear, seem instead moulded by their long shifting. An underground stream filtering down through the sand slowly formed these great teardrops of stone frozen motionless in their desperate flight. What had succeeded in escaping instead was the water, which in its flight, day after day, century after century, carried away with it a subtle layer of substance to deposit on the surface of some poor obstacle, which in this way continued thickening and growing, and was thus transformed into an immortal form. Many of the most striking modern sculptures have been found in this deposit, a lode in which they had been lying for the last twenty-five million years.

Roger Caillois, Stones, 1966

Taking a stone from the right pocket of my greatcoat, and putting it in my mouth, I replaced it in the right pocket of my greatcoat by a stone from the right pocket of my trousers, which I replaced by a stone from the left pocket of my trousers, which I replaced by a stone from the left pocket of my greatcoat, which I replaced by the stone which was in my mouth, as soon as I had finished sucking it.

Samuel Beckett, Molloy, 1965

*I knock at the stone's front door.
"It's only me, let me come in.
I hear you have great empty halls inside you,
unseen, their beauty in vain,
soundless, not echoing anyone's steps.
Admit you don't know them well yourself."*

*"Great and empty, true enough," says the stone,
but there isn't any room.
Beautiful, perhaps, but not to the taste
of your poor senses.
You may get to know me, but you'll never know me through.
My whole surface is turned toward you,
all my insides turned away."*

Wisława Szymborska, Conversation with a stone, 1962

And stone among stones, he returned in the joy of his heart to the truth of the motionless worlds.

Albert Camus, *A Happy Death*, 1971

A as Stone starts from an assumed misunderstanding: an attempt to spell a word using a letter that it doesn't contain. A twist that draws a parallel between language and landscape, considering each notion in its most reduced reality. In the same way, the first letter of the alphabet represents a primary state of language; the stone is a miniature element that counts for the landscape as a whole.

The four artists in the exhibition all share this double interest in reduced forms in both language and landscape as fragmented and metonymic entity. Other topics at stake are the relationship between a thing and its representation, between culture and nature, and finally between living beings and the lifeless world.

The **Alis / Filliol** duo (Davide Gennarino and Andrea Respino) questions the body and volume, action and its crystallization in space. *Occupare meno spazio possibile* is a mold for a cast of the huddled body of one of the two artists made by the other; *Nero assoluto calco* is a photograph in which a rock fragment painted matte black takes on the appearance of a hole as a missing part of an image of itself; *Destro diritto, destro rovescio* features a pair of abraded work gloves "sculpted" by the hard work of carrying stone.

Drawing his inspiration from pre-modern and popular science, **Rodolphe Delaunay's** work uses existing objects, especially measurement tools, to charge them with imagination in order to propose another perception of the world. In a retro-futurist way that inverts the cosmos upon itself, a telescope has been replaced by a silex stone. Another work presents the 1872 edition of Jules Verne's novel *From the Earth to the Moon*, whose cover faces a mirror. Barely readable, the book's inverted title suggests a journey backwards to the Earth.

Adrien Missika uses photography without adopting any particular style, format, or predefined technique, ideally embracing them all in pursuit of an impossible synthesis of what photography represents today. Another aspect of his work concerns the physical support given to the image and its presentation in space. In *A as Stone*, he offers a selection of shots from his archive that regard the topics of travel, architecture, and landscape, as well as the video *Twelve Spinning Stones*, in which a number of photographs of rock surfaces have been digitally retouched.

Bettina Samson's work constructs unexpected relationships between historical facts, scientific discoveries, sci-fi literature and cinema. The two prints *Nuclear Dust* show invisible rays emitted by a radioactive dust left by accident onto a photographic film during the artist's experiments with pitchblende stones. The sculpture *Llano del Rio pop up (Ozymandias)* draws an entropic parallel between a socialist community of the 20s and Aldous Huxley's experience in the same desert 40 years later.

The artists

The **Alis / Filliol** duo was formed in 2007 by Davide Gennarino (1979, currently based in Torino) and Andrea Respino (1976, also a Torino resident). Both artists graduated in Sculpture from Torino's Albertina Fine Arts Academy and both take part in the Diogene project. The most recent personal shows include: *Calco di due corpi in movimento nello spazio*, Cripta747, Torino; *Paesaggi a scavare*, blank, Torino; *Testa di sirena urlante*, MARS, Milano, all made in 2010.

Rodolphe Delaunay (1984, based in Paris) graduated from the Paris School of Art in 2008. His work was shown at Salon de Montrouge in 2009 and Galerie Frédéric Lacroix, Paris, in 2010. In 2011, he will participate in the group show *Le Monde Physique* at La Galerie Contemporary Art Centre in Noisy-le-Sec. He will also be showing his work in Italy for the first time.

<http://rodolphe.ultra-book.org/>

Adrien Missika (1981, lives between Geneva and Paris) graduated from Lausanne's Ecole Cantonale des Beaux Arts. Together with Jeanne Graff, Stéphane Barbier Bouvet, and Benjamin Valenza, he cofounded the 1m3 Gallery in Lausanne. Recent shows include: *PresentFuture*, Artissima, Torino, 2009; *Veduta*, la Rada, Locarno, 2010; *Captain Cook's Grave*, and Blancpain Art Contemporain, Ginevra, 2010.

<http://www.adrienmissika.com/>

Bettina Samson (1978, based in Paris) graduated from the Lyon School of Art in 2003. In 2009, she had solo shows at La Galerie Contemporary Art Centre in Noisy-le-Sec and at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, where she also recently participated in *Dynasty*. She will also be showing her work in Italy for the first time.

<http://www.documentsdartistes.org/artistes/samson/>