

*But I doubt, I tremble, I see  
(shaking edges) and the wild thorn tree*

Giuliana Rosso & Rory Pilgrim  
curated by Caterina Avataneo

May 6 – June 5, 2021  
Thu – Sat, 12pm – 5pm

A project by Open Space (London) & Pina (Vienna)  
Supported by Q. International

Open Space and Pina are pleased to present a project by Rory Pilgrim and Giuliana Rosso, unfolding through a special mail-art commission, an edition of 100, available via Open Space and a show at Pina (Vienna), opening in May 2021. Curated by Caterina Avataneo.

Creating parallels between puberty, history and wilderness - all of dynamic character - the project proposes to look at transformative, chaotic, conflictual and emotional existence as a moment of (re)discovery of the world. Teenage becomes a point of access to frictional states; a way to consider their generative empathic potential for establishing new ways to be in the world at the end of History, as understood by western modernity.

*But I doubt, I tremble, I see (shaking edges and) the wild thorn tree* brings together the work of Rory Pilgrim and Giuliana Rosso, but also the lives of Liam Neupert, Declan, Piper, Erikk, Jared and some fictional characters. They constitute different subjectivities, ages and agencies but all share a state of crisis, and the impulse for rebellion and change. With their exposed passions, internal conflicts and unstable being, they suggest that vulnerability is key for an empathic understanding of the world. They are geared to really doubt - to tremble - and thus to see. The power they care about is not controlling the future, but overwriting the past to shake off a very final end. Their present is of struggle, relational rather than exploitative, transformative rather than calcified and that's where, as in nature and in history, renewal germinates. They can give new edges to old forms...

But let's step back, and start from the very beginning.

In 2019 Rory Pilgrim gathered 10 Youth Climate Activists from Boise and other small towns in Idaho USA - Liam Neupert was one of them. Over a period of 2 months of workshops, field trips, vlogs and assemblies, Rory nurtured the conditions for an intimate exchange, where to explore personal struggles in a time of climate crisis. The 10 young activists shared how climate change interconnects with other aspects of their lives including family, religion, friendship, fighting for gender equality and the essential need for a home. Rory captured these moments in the 50 minute long film *The Undercurrent*, exploring the emotional means we have - collectively and individually - to articulate crisis while also catalyzing change.

*The Undercurrent* became the starting point for a dialogue with Giuliana Rosso, whose paintings, drawings and papier-mâché sculptures present seemingly somber atmospheres that allow to investigate interiority and its shadows, from where unusual (alternative) realities spring up. The subjects of Giuliana's work too, are teenagers and young adults, often showing paradoxical and contradictory - emotional rather than rational - relationships with the environment that surrounds them. They are able to abandon themselves to moments of illusion, paralysis and destruction of one's axiomatic interpretation of what is possible, whilst connecting with the real. Through them, fears materialize, imaginary presences become real and invisible powers manifest as perceptible.

*But I doubt, I tremble, I see (shaking edges and) the wild thorn tree* takes its title from the 1931 novel "The Waves" by Virginia Woolf but overwrites it, allowing for interpretation. You too can participate...

RORY PILGRIM (b. 1988, UK) works in a wide range of media including songwriting, composing music, film, music video, text, drawing and live performances. Centred on emancipatory concerns, Pilgrim aims to challenge the nature of how we come together, speak, listen and strive for social change through sharing and voicing personal experience. Strongly influenced by the origins of activist, feminist and socially engaged art, Pilgrim works with others through a different methods of dialogue, collaboration and workshops. In an age of increasing technological interaction, Rory's work creates connections between activism, spirituality, music and how we form community locally and globally from both beyond and behind our screens. Solo Shows include: *Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe* (2020), *Between Bridges, Berlin* (2019) *Andriess-Eyck Gallery, Amsterdam NL* (2018), *South London Gallery* (2018), *Plymouth Art Centre, Plymouth* (2017), *Flat Time House, London* (2016), *Site Gallery, Sheffield* (2016) and *sic! Raum für Kunst, Luzern CH* (2014). In 2019, Pilgrim was the winner of the *Prix de Rome*.

GIULIANA ROSSO (b.1992, Italy) is an artist whose research moves between painting and drawing, with three-dimensional contaminations. She investigates interiority and its shadows, the most hidden corners of conscience as well as moments suspended between the present and the future. The imaginary of her works often relate to proverbs, fairy tales and premonitions, popular imagination inhabited by spirits and ancient fears; as well as hypnagogic somnolence, altered states and alternative realities. Using delicate materials and puberty subjects, she celebrates the fragility and fears of the individual through a contemporary reinterpretation of universal themes of transition, change and anxiety. Recent solo shows include: *Virginia Bianchi Gallery, Bologna IT* (2020); *Almanac, Torino IT* (2019); *VEDA, Florence IT* (2018). She is currently showing as part of a group show at *Castello di Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli IT*.

THE PROJECT is part of a series started in 2019 by Caterina Avataneo, based on duo-collaborations between artists with divergent practices, employing very different concerns, mediums or aesthetic languages. The intent is to contribute to the shaping of the final show through conversation and togetherness, letting the project unfold organically and differently every time. Generally sharing one single room, the space becomes an active agent in which the act of interweaving divergent practices generates new work or new links between existing works, exploring the collaborative nature of producing meaning out of differences. The first collaboration happened in 2019 with Anna Barham & Chiara Camoni at *Arcade* (London); then in 2020 with Diego Delas & Rolf Nowotny at *HAUS* (Wien). The experiment will recur in April 2022 at *SixtyEight Art Institute* (Copenhagen), with *Jeremiah Day & Anastasia Sosunova*.

CATERINA AVATANEO (b. 1989, Italy) is a curator based between London and Turin. She was awarded the 2017 NEON Curatorial Award by The Neon Foundation and Whitechapel Gallery and her curatorial projects have appeared in Institutions and galleries including: *Zabludowicz Collection, Kunstraum, White Crypt, Gossamer Fog, Austrian Cultural Forum* (all London); *Britta Rettberg* (Munich) and *SixtyEight Art Institute* (Copenhagen). Since 2018 she is Associate Curator at *Arcade London & Brussels* and Curatorial Assistant on assigned projects at *Serpentine Galleries*. Recently she was curator in residence at *RUPERT* (Vilnius) and *Salzburger Kunstverein* (Salzburg) as well as Assistant Curator of the *Lithuanian Pavilion* for the 58th Venice Biennale, winner of the Golden Lion.