



CLAIRE FONTAINE M-A-C-C-H-I-N-A-Z-I-O-N-I

04/02/2012 - 13/05/2012

An outline of Italy made of thousands of match heads, an “inflammatory” material that highlights the country’s current instability, alluding to the catastrophe that always seems to be just round the corner. This is one of the installations that greeted visitors to “M - A - C - C - H - I - N - A - Z - I - O - N - I”, the Claire Fontaine exhibition that opened Museion’s 2012 programme.

The Claire Fontaine collective, founded in Paris in 2004, takes its name from a well-known French brand of stationery. The works of this self-styled “ready-made artist”, underpinned by theoretical research, often resemble those of other artists, and indeed the collective challenges the very figure of the artist, viewed as a “whatever singularity”, the subjective equivalent of a urinal or a box of Brillo pads and therefore equally interchangeable. The Museion event is the collective’s first solo show in an Italian museum.

Claire Fontaine’s works spring from and reference highly topical socio-political issues, deploying inspired metaphors and a generous dose of utopian vision. The Bolzano show presented a selection of previous works and new creations: videos, neon texts, installations and the collective’s “machinery-sculptures”, that expose the closed, irrational nature of the capitalist economy, intent on preserving its status quo at any price. The title of the exhibition (which translates as ‘Machinations’) references the machine metaphor that underpins capitalism, with its relentless production/consumption cycle - an image that was first used by the economist Joseph Schumpeter in 1942.

“In 2012, inviting Claire Fontaine to stage a solo show in Museion meant underlining the potential and scope for action that lies in socially and politically committed contemporary art. What emerged from the exhibition was how Claire Fontaine’s works set out to and succeeded in sparking thought processes, and her belief that art can create open, even utopian spaces”, comments Letizia Ragaglia, director of Museion and curator of the exhibition.

Curated by Letizia Ragaglia