

Sylke von Gaza - Solo Exhibition

Gabriel & Lucifero

The most precious Pigment of Renaissance Venice

Palazzo Contarini Polignac, Magazzino Gallery, Venezia, April/May 2018

Palazzo Contarini Polignac

Sylke von Gaza is pleased to announce her forthcoming solo exhibition in April/May 2018 at Magazzino Gazzino Gallery of Palazzo Contarini Polignac in Venice. The renowned house, situated on the Canale Grande, was the seat of the Contarini Conti di Zaffo, one of the wealthiest Venetian families during the time of the Serenissima Repubblica di Venezia in the 16th century. By the end of the 19th century, the Palazzo Contarini Polignac had become well known for its prominent owner, Winnaretta Singer, Princesse Edmond de Polignac. One of the daughters of Isaac Merritt Singer, famous for his sewing machines, Winnaretta Singer became a leading supporters of modern classical music. Among her protégés were the composers Igor Stravinsky, Erik Satie and Reynaldo Hahn as well as the writer Marcel Proust. Embracing this artistic legacy, the Palazzo in close proximity to the Gallerie dell'Accademia and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection has since become one of the major sites for Biennale exhibitions outside the Giardini & the Arsenale.

Ultramarine

With her exhibition, German artist Sylke von Gaza invites the visitor to experience the overwhelming effect of Renaissance Venice's most precious pigment: ultramarine. The celebrated Venetian explorer Marco Polo mentioned the occurrence of Lapis lazuli in Afghan mines in his travelogues describing the epic voyage through Asia he had undertaken with his father and uncle between 1271 and 1295. At the time Afghanistan was still unknown to the Western world. In the Renaissance, Venice was the most important centre for the trade in artists' pigments and Venetian merchants imported the precious deep blue Lapis lazuli from 'beyond the sea' - hence the name ultramarine - along the Silk Road and finally by ship to Venice, whence it was distributed throughout the rest of Europe. Ultramarine, with its Afghan provenance, was more valuable than gold. Papal commissioners in Rome often paid for the pigment in advance to save the painters in their employ from bankrupting themselves over the stipulation that ultramarine be used for the iconic blue veil and mantle of the Madonna, which symbolised the Virgin's purity and status as the eternal Queen of Heaven.

From Mariano Fortuny to Winnaretta Singer

Working with the ultramarine pigment, Sylke von Gaza created a series of abstract paintings that reference the tradition of the Old Masters. The exhibition revolves around two large-scale works, "Gabriel" and "Lucifero". Named after the archangels, the two paintings make their first public appearance at Palazzo Contarini Polignac. The visitor is invited to take

her/his time, to sit in an armchair and to contemplate and experience the pigment's alchemical power and its effect on the subconscious. The text "Mysterium Coniunctionis. Gabriel & Lucifero di Sylke von Gaza" by the Italian philosopher and professor of aesthetics, Guido Luciano Brivio Gabutti Di Bestagno, is part of the setting and offered to the visitor to complement her/his own inner dialogue.

Each of the works on show was painted in Sylke von Gaza's Venetian atelier on the top floor of Palazzo Martinengo in San Gregorio, a short walk from the exhibition. Palazzo Martinengo was the first Venetian residence of Mariano Fortuny, the famous Spanish "Renaissance man" who was part of the circle around Winnaretta Singer at the beginning of the 20th century. With her exhibition "Gabriel & Lucifero. The most precious Pigment of Renaissance Venice", Sylke von Gaza is picking out and interweaving some of the contemporary, modern and early modern threads that form the warp and weft of the uniquely complex fabric of history that has shaped the city at the heart of the Venetian lagoon.

More:

Palazzo Contarini Polignac
Magazzino Gallery
Dorsoduro 874
30123 Venezia
www.palazzocontarinipolignac.com

Opening hours:

11 April - 30 May 2018
Tuesday/Friday/Saturday, 15.00 -18.00 pm
or by appointment: studio@vongaza.com

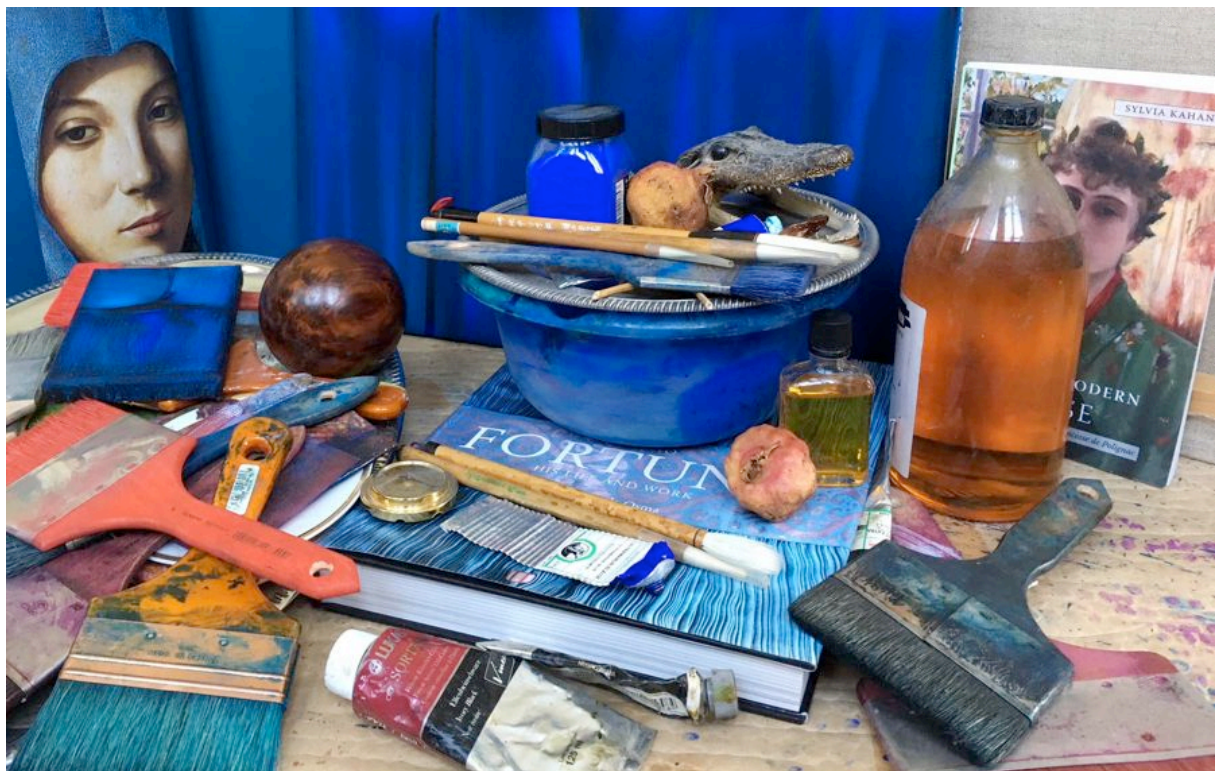
Sylke von Gaza
Official Artist Website
www.vongaza.com

Material support by:

Kvadrat | www.kvadrat.dk
Kremer Pigment | www.kremer-pigmente.com

Vernissage:

Wednesday, 11 April 2018, 18.30 pm



Detail of Sylke von Gaza's atelier at Palazzo Martinengo in Venezia, March 2018.