



## MAXXI and Bvlgari join forces to support young talents in the arts

FROM 28 OCTOBER 2020 TO 7 MARCH 2021

SITE-SPECIFIC WORKS OF THE THREE FINALISTS OF THE SECOND  
MAXXI BVLGARI PRIZE ON DISPLAY AT MAXXI

## GIULIA CENCI, TOMASO DE LUCA, RENATO LEOTTA

a warning about the future of humanity in **Giulia Cenci's** zoomorphic sculptures;  
an ode to freedom and diversity in **Tomaso De Luca's** video installation;  
the suspended time of the Sacred Area of Largo Argentina in **Renato Leotta's** work.

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Rome, 27 October 2020. **Giulia Cenci** (Cortona, 1988, lives and works in Amsterdam and Tuscany), **Tomaso De Luca** (Verona, 1988, lives and works in Berlin) and **Renato Leotta** (Turin, 1982, lives and works in Turin and Acireale) are the three finalists for the **MAXXI BVLGARI PRIZE**, the project bringing together MAXXI – National Museum of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Arts and **Bvlgari**, an emblem of Italian excellence for over 130 years to support and promote young artists.

The three finalists were chosen by an international jury composed by **Hou Hanru**, Artistic Director at MAXXI, **Bartolomeo Pietromarchi** Director of MAXXI Arte, **Manuel Borja-Villel**, Director of the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid, **Emma Lavigne**, President of the Palais de Tokyo and **Victoria Noorthoorn**, Director of the Buenos Aires Museum of Modern Art.

Their site-specific artworks created for the PRIZE will be on show at MAXXI, the National Museum of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Arts from 28 October 2020 to 7 March 2021. The exhibition, curated by **Giulia Ferracci**, will engage visitors right from the lobby and will develop in the spectacular Gallery 5, on the third floor.

By the end of the exhibition, the same international jury will choose the winner, whose work will become part of the MAXXI Collection.

**Giovanna Melandri**, President of Fondazione MAXXI, says: "MAXXI BVLGARI PRIZE is one of the most important events to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Museum, and is part of the broader project dedicated to contemporary Italian creativity. After the mid-career artists of REAL\_ITALY and the great masters of *senzamargine*, we now look, together with Bvlgari, a company that has always been committed to research and experimentation and our strategic partner since 2018, to young artists, because supporting young talent means investing in the creativity of our time and our future, which is a mission shared by MAXXI and Bvlgari. The intense, evocative works of the 3 finalists reflect on time and the anxieties of today's society and explore the future. It is a pleasure to host them at MAXXI".

Jean-Christophe Babin, CEO of Bvlgari, says "Once again, the MAXXI BVLGARI PRIZE finalists offer us a reading of the world we live in through their very personal language and the use of highly innovative expressive techniques. Their works invite us to reflect on universal themes such as change, creative regeneration, an alternative conception of space and time. Our work alongside MAXXI is a way to offer the Museum and Rome the most precious gifts: the audacity and free spirit of the protagonists of tomorrow's art."

### MAXXI BVLGARI PRIZE. The exhibition

The exhibition route starts from the walkway on the third floor, which runs from the exit of the lift to the entrance to Gallery 5. Here we find **lento-violento**, the largest installation created by **Giulia Cenci**, which is divided into four groups of sculptures, four plastic clusters suspended in space that invade the room and impose on the visitor constant perspective changes, projecting them into a world of hybrid, fluid, partly human, partly animal forms. Through this monumental installation, the artist stages the changes and tensions between man and nature, the machine of hyper-productive capitalism and unbridled consumerism, the conflicts of our time and a dystopian future for humanity. Already in the first sculptural cluster, the subjects are

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two anthropomorphic figures who seem to challenge each other. The conflict erupts in the second group of casts, along the balustrade, where the legs of headless horses seem to be thrown into the fray. The third scene is a sort of prison, a grid that descends almost as low as the hall and traps small figures without connotations, guarded by a monstrous creature. The path closes with an image of apparent calm, an abandoned moorland where a zoomorphic machine looms from above, similar to an airship.

The exhibition continues inside Gallery 5 with ***A Week's Notice***, a video and sound installation on three channels by **Tomaso De Luca**, where miniatures of houses borrowed from cinema, architecture history and the artist's private life fly, collapse, go crazy and jam, in an ode to the decay of architecture that seeks beauty in instability and makes trauma a ground for creation.

The work offers an alternative ending to the unforgiving phenomenon of gentrification that, between the 1980s and 1990s, followed the AIDS crisis. While in the neighbourhoods of large cities the homosexual community, which was the most affected by the epidemic in those decades, disappeared, the market saw an opportunity in the carnage: furniture and personal belongings were thrown out onto the streets and flats were put back on the market for healthier and more affluent tenants.

In an attempt to regain this lost space, the artist transforms domestic architecture into a disorienting space, where the sense of loss and precariousness become elements for fostering a reconstruction.

***Roma and Fiumi***, a project dedicated to the city of **Renato Leotta**, end the itinerary: twelve films, shot in 16 mm film, are presented on twelve screens distributed in the Museum space as though to evoke an ideal walk through the remains of the city. The films were shot among the iconic fountains of Barcaccia, Trevi, and Quattro Fiumi and the sacred area of Largo di Torre Argentina: a gash in the asphalt, showing the anatomy of the ancient city lying under the road surface. From the balustrade that marks the perimeter of the area, inaccessible to visitors but visible only from above, you can see a space cut out from the hectic urban flow that revolves around it, the Largo being a crucial junction for city traffic, a space governed by a different temporality, out of sync, and populated exclusively by cats. With this unusual walk through the ruins, where the cats move cautiously and sinuously, looking at the visitor in an inquisitive way, the artist reflects on art as a means of rethinking the relationship between man, nature and the anthropised landscape, re-establishing a relationship between society and animality (text taken from the caption of the work on display written by Sara De Chiara).

## MAXXI BVLGARI PRIZE 2020: THE FINALISTS

**Giulia Cenci** (Cortona IT, 1988, lives and works in Amsterdam and Tuscany) was chosen for “the aesthetic tension present in her work that restores sculpture to its central role within the visual arts debate, as well as for her reflection on society’s future scenarios.” She was proposed by Marianna Vecellio, Curator at Castello di Rivoli, Turin, who writes: “The works of Cenci are hybrid forms, resulting from the coexistence between living beings and an environment that is violently attacked by human beings. Through the study of form, the works of Cenci address the idea of the living being in the light of contemporary philosophical theories, which refer to the current age as the Anthropocene, a geological era that is the product of an irreversible action by human beings on the environment. Her works are the result of a formal, political and ontological “composting” process, and encourage us to change the way we look at the world, matter and human beings.”

**Tomaso De Luca** (Verona, 1988, lives and works in Berlin) was chosen for “his ability to explore history’s different identities through the investigation of the role of objects in the contemporary social and political context”. As Lorenzo Benedetti, Curator at Kunstmuseum in St. Gallen, who proposed him writes: “Through the use of drawings, sculptures, videos and installations steeped in literary, philosophical and general culture references, Tomaso De Luca experiments with formal solutions in which the collective imagination is placed in a dialogue with a broader cultural spectrum. De Luca questions the symptoms of our society. A character of obsolescence seems to be present in his works creating a form of resistance to the consumerist nature of our time.”

**Renato Leotta** (Turin, 1982, lives and works in Turin and Acireale, Sicily), was chosen for “the independent nature of his research within the Italian national art scene and for the narrative force of his works that echoes the existential condition of contemporary human beings.” He was proposed by Marianna Vecellio, Curator at Castello di Rivoli, Turin, who writes: Like a true archaeologist of reality, he observes the landscape to study its constitutive elements and capture its transient phenomena. Using different media, such as sculpture, photography, video, drawing and primary materials such as earth, sand and salt, he captures fragments of experience and turns them into mental pictures. In his works, he presents the reconstruction of an imagery,

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and through it he also provides a reconstruction of the cultural identity of today's humanity, Moreover, his practice creates a poetic combination of apparently distant elements, such as history and the Mediterranean, the memory of places and reality, the sea and the earth, the North and South of the world.”

## HISTORY OF THE PRIZE

The Prize, created in 2000 as the 'Premio per la Giovane Arte', represents the point of departure and the birth of the MAXXI Arte collection. Over the years it has been an important springboard for many artists. Between 2001 and 2018 **42 artists** have taken part in the nine editions and include: **Mario Airò, Yuri Ancarani, Giorgio Andreotta Calò, Stefano Arienti, Micol Assaël, Rosa Barba, Massimo Bartolini, Vanessa Beecroft, Rossella Biscotti, Ludovica Carbotta, Patrizio Di Massimo, Bruna Esposito, Lara Favaretto, Piero Golia, Adelita Husni-Bey, Avish Khebrezhadeh, Liliana Moro, Marinella Senatore, Nico Vascellari, Vedovamazzei, Francesco Vezzoli, Zapruder** among many others. The first MAXXI BVLGARI Prize (2018) was awarded to **Diego Marcon**, with the powerful and evocative video installation *Ludwig*, now part of the MAXXI Collection. The other finalists were **Talia Chetrit** and **Invernomuto**, whose work *Calendoola: SURUS* was acquired by MAXXI thanks to the contribution of the Friends of MAXXI.

**Mediapartner of MAXXI BVLGARI PRIZE 2020: SKY Arte, Esquire italia, Marie Claire Italia**

## MAXXI – National Museum of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Arts

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