

Simon Starling. The Inaccessible Poem

From 28 October 2011 through 15 January 2012

Exhibition project by Simon Starling

Featuring works by Faivovich & Goldberg, Sture Johannesson, Mario Merz, James Nasmyth & James Carpenter and Simon Starling

Curated by Maria Centonze

Opening October 28, 2011, the Fondazione Merz presents a major exhibition conceived by Simon Starling and curated by Maria Centonze. For the first time in Italy, the artist has personally designed the project of an exhibition that combines some of his recent works with works by Mario Merz, Sture Johannesson, James Nasmyth & James Carpenter, and Faivovich & Goldberg.

Looking through different generations of art production and scientific activity, the English artist explores the connections between art and science over the centuries. As curator Maria Centonze suggests "All investigations into Simon Starling's multiple fields of interest converge into a hybrid space that is distinctive of his work. A space that absorbs from science and feeds on technology but also attempts to redefine the boundaries of things and thought, to the point of generating microcosms of ideas that are to be connected or placed in contrast with one another. The entire exhibition unfolds as if the works, by narrating different stories actually revealed one constant feature: the establishing of illusory distances—the altering of time and space through empirical means that convey visions of a possible and just as truthful reality".

Starling offers a critique of technology, dismantling its very rules to ultimately deliver a transposition that has a rather poetic feel to it. In this perspective he highlights many points of contact with the work of the other artists showcased in the exhibition, and in particular with Mario Merz, with whom he shares that constant desire to act as a nomad. One of Starling's starting points is the work of two amateur astronomers, Nasmyth and Carpenter, whose speculative approach resulted in a series of drawings based on their telescope observation of the lunar surface; the same drawings were used to build models, which were then photographed to produce strangely poetic images of the inaccessible celestial body alluded to in the title of the exhibition.

Facts and manipulations of history are also the subject of the recently completed work *Project for a Masquerade*. In the video, shown in the lower ground floor, Starling documents the various phases in the creation of a specially designed set of masks made by the Noh mask maker, Yasuo Miichi. The masks crafted throughout the video take on the features of some renowned international characters, both historical and fictional, who are variously linked to the events surrounding the commissioning of a sculpture to mark the site of the beginning of the Atom Bomb project in Chicago. This leads to investigation into the evolution of a sculpture with a double identity Henry Moore's *Atom Piece / Nuclear Energy* (1963): a celebratory monument in Chicago and a testimony to the terrible human catastrophe at the Hiroshima Museum of Contemporary Art.

Starling's focus on the relationship between fact and fiction according to scientific investigation shifts to *El Meson de Fierro* by Argentinean artists Faivovich & Goldberg. In a new chapter of their extensive project *A Guide to Campo Cielo*—which addresses the manipulation of cultural and scientific information on the meteorites that fell to earth four thousand years ago—the two young artists focus on the now legendary missing meteorite El Meson de Fierro and the speculations and investigations its disappearance has prompted.

In the spaces of the Fondazione, the artist also presents his new work *1,1,2*, purposely created for the exhibition along the line of works exploring the connections between materials and data, such as *The Long Ton*, with direct reference here to Mario Merz's piece, *Spostamenti della terra e della luna su un asse* to narrate how illusions can generate new forms of balance.

Special thanks to the Galleria Franco Noero for their collaboration.

The event is part of 

Exhibition Details

Title	Simon Starling
Dates	28 October 2011 – 15 January 2012
Press Conference	Friday, October 28, 2011 at 12 pm, Fondazione Merz
Opening	Friday, October 28, 2011 at 7 pm, Fondazione Merz
Venue	Fondazione Merz – Via Limone 24
Museum hours	Tuesday - Sunday 11 am – 7 pm
Admission:	€ 5,00 (Adults) € 3,50 (students, groups min. 10 people)
Free:	children under 10, senior citizens, people with disabilities and every first Sunday of the month
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