



THE END OF UTOPIA

Jacob Hashimoto

Emil Lukas

Palazzo Flangini, Cannaregio 252, Venice

Vip preview 9 - 12 May, 10.00 am - 6.00 pm

Opening with drinks 12 May, 6.00 pm – 9.00 pm

Exhibition 13 May – 30 July, 2017, 11.00 am – 6.00 pm. Closed on Monday



THE EXHIBITION

Jacob Hashimoto and Emil Lukas, two internationally recognized American artists, have been invited by Studio la Città Gallery to stage a site-specific show in Palazzo Flangini reflecting on "The End of Utopia."

As we move deeper into the Anthropocene, the cost of our ascendancy is becoming clear. Decades of environmental exploitation have left us perilously balanced and wavering on every side: political, social, economic, natural, technological, and ecological. As many observers of the Anthropocene have noted with apt unease, humanity itself has increasingly become the perpetrator, rather than victim, of planetary chaos. In the midst of these conditions, Hashimoto and Lukas's work addresses a question of newfound relevance: If art is arguably the interpolation of manmade schema onto nature - humankind's order upon primordial chaos - then how does art's meaning mutate, as we realize that the infrastructures, systems, and algorithms all originally designed by humans to bring utopia within reach, are in fact dooming its very viability?



Upon entering Palazzo Flangini's seventeenth-century ground-floor space, visitors encounter an immense, floating, site-specific sculpture by Jacob Hashimoto, comprising 8500 black bamboo-and-paper kites suspended from the ceiling and assembled into a spectacular, roiling cloud that crests overhead.

This sculpture, according to the artist, is intended to be one of weight, not light. Forgoing his usual visual vocabulary of highly iconicized landscape elements, geometries, and vivid colors, Hashimoto has instead created a monochromatic piece using black, 9" kite-like discs. Upon close examination, the ellipsoidal surfaces reveal traces of barely perceptible stars, screenprinted in ink that has become ghostly and indistinct after seeping into the work's black backgrounds. Emerging quietly in light, these stars—which suggest elements of flags and firmament alike—evoke art's history of multifariously addressing both the blunt banners of politics, and the celestial realms that transcend them.

Emil Lukas's work occupies the first-floor of the space. Lukas has created three separate, but interwoven, groups of work: "Lens," "Puddles," and "Threads." At one end of the vast gallery, 650 aluminium pipes are assembled into a giant lens of sorts. Through its side-by-side tubes, the concave, almost iridescent sculpture affords a vista that moves with the viewer according to his or her position. From the right angle, the lens focuses and isolates the viewer, distilling the experience of the artwork to a single, fundamental perspective—the watchman's post in the Panopticon.

While *Lens* speaks to the seductive nature of observation and surveillance, the *Puddle* paintings are vast microcosmic landscapes that, conversely, conjure an unobserved, almost geologic progression of time. More like sculpture than painting in many ways, these works feature surfaces pulled into funnel-like concavities by clusters of taut thread. Lukas then allows masses of paint to collect in these depressions, letting the pigments separate, reticulate, and form stratifications. As the paintings dry, the pigments leach through each canvas, staining and revealing the surfaces' buried histories.

Lukas's *Thread* paintings are delicate overlapping skeins of colorful thread, anchored to the sides of idiosyncratic wood stretchers that frame uneven, pockmarked white-plaster backing. These threads cross each other most densely around the stretchers' perimeters, leaving the centers of the constructions relatively spare. The effect of this patterned density creates a powerful optical illusion of volume from a distance. As the viewer approaches each work more closely, its skein of threads becomes apparent, and a delicate atmosphere, shifting over an alien landscape, is revealed.

THE ARTISTS

Jacob Hashimoto was born in 1973 in Greeley, Colorado, U.S.A. He lives and works in New York. His works have been exhibited in prestigious American museums, such as the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, MOCA Pacific Design Center in Los Angeles, LACMA - Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Schauwerk in Sindelfingen, Germany. In Italy, he has participated in exhibitions at MACRO - Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome, at the Querini Stampalia Foundation and the Fortuny Museum in Venice. He is represented by Studio la Città, Galerie Forsblom in Helsinki, Makasiini Contemporary in Turku and in America by Rhona Hoffman Gallery in Chicago.



Emil Lukas was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1964. He has exhibited throughout the United States and abroad. Solo museum shows include, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Connecticut, The Weatherspoon Museum, North Carolina, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia. Lukas' work has been featured in group shows at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto and The Drawing Center, New York. His work is in important private and public collections, including the Panza Collection, Italy, The Dakis Joannou Collection, Greece, the Anderson Collection, Stanford University, California, the Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas, the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the UBS Art Collection and the Weatherspoon Art Museum. Emil Lukas has been represented by Studio la Città since the early 90's with a first one person show in 1993. In the United States he is represented by Sperone Westwater Gallery, New York and Hosfelt Gallery, San Francisco.

THE GALLERY

Studio la Città is a contemporary art gallery that was inaugurated in Verona in 1969 by Hélène de Franchis, who continues to run it today.

The gallery represents well-known artists at both the national and international level and collaborates with museums and public and private institutions on important exhibition projects. The new Lungadige Galtarossa headquarters was opened in 2007, where, in its large exindustrial spaces, Studio la Città always organises shows and events which showcase their artistic innovation and quality.

General Information

Exhibition dates: 13 May - 30 July, 2017

Venue: Palazzo Flangini, Cannaregio 252, Venice

Opening hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 11:00 am- 6:00 pm/ Closed on Monday. Free admission.

Vaporetto Stop: Ferrovia

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