

Press release

Ottonella Mocellin - Nicola Pellegrini

With the occasional rainbow visiting

Opening Wednesday April 2 2008, 7.00 pm

Galleria Lia Rumma Napoli, Via Vannella Gaetani, 12 – 80121 Naples

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Gallery opening hours: from Tuesday to Saturday 11.00 am to 1.30 pm and 4.00 pm to 7.30 pm. On other days by appointment.

The Lia Rumma Gallery in Naples is pleased to present the video-installation by Ottonella Mocellin and Nicola Pellegrini *With the occasional rainbow visiting*.

By means of an installation which simultaneously show three different videos, the artists create a thought-provoking reflection on living conditions in Palestine and Israel.

By hearing different voices, ranging from the Palestinian journalist Leila El Haddad, to the Israeli writer David Grossman and the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, combined with other sources of information such as blogs, newspaper and magazine articles and audio clips downloaded from the internet, the artists construct an imaginary dialogue in which different points of view, cultures and origins converge until they eventually overlap, displaying a shared existential condition.

The themes of identity and relationships with others, which frequently occur in the work of the two artists, are addressed here through the description of daily life in a situation of conflict.

By imagining the idea of exile as an existential condition, Ottonella Mocellin and Nicola Pellegrini have sought to explore the extent to which control and fear have changed our lives as well.

In the central video, the black background - which is gradually marked by bullets - is transformed first into a starry sky until it slowly turns into the text of the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish. The text is superimposed by images of Palestinian flowers – reproductions of drawings by the nineteenth century Swiss missionary Hanna Zeller – which appear and gradually disappear, leaving a ghostly white trace on the screen, as if the ephemeral beauty of flowers, in a dramatic context like the one described, simultaneously contained the essence of life and its own denial. The videos on either side show a visionary video collage in which the images, which are intended to contrast with the daily images of conflict provided by the media, take on an alienating, poetic quality.

The book *An incongruous beam of beauty over the Gaza Strip*, published by Charta with a critical commentary by Emanuela De Cecco, will be presented at the opening.

The video installation and the book form part of a larger project which also includes a theatrical performance which was presented in April 2007 at the Out Off Theatre in Milan.

Ottonella Mocellin (born in Milan in 1966) and Nicola Pellegrini (born in Milan in 1962) have already exhibited their work in the Lia Rumma Gallery in Naples in 2002 and in Milan in 2005. Their main personal exhibitions include *Le cose non sono quelle che sembrano* (Things are not what they seem), curated by Francesca Pasini, La Marrana Arte ambientale, Monte Marcello (SP) held in 2005, *In the mood for love*, curated by Liza Plavinsky, MUAR, Moscow in 2003, and *Il Gioco della verità* (The Truth Game), curated by Bartolomeo Pietromarchi, Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, Rome in 2001. Their main collective exhibitions include *La parola nell'arte* (The word in art), MART, Rovereto in 2007, *Young Italian Artists at the Turn of the Millennium*, Galleria Continua, Beijing, *D'Ombra* curated by Lea Vergine, Palazzo delle Papesse, Siena and MAN, Nuoro held in 2006; the Fourteenth Rome Quadriennial in 2005, "U-Topos" held at the Tirana Biennial in 2003, *Listening to new voices*, PS1, New York and Videozone, Tel Aviv Biennial in 2002, *Videorom* at the Valencia Biennial in 2001 and the International Biennial of Photography, Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin held in 1999.