

Capriccio

Mary Ramsden, Anastasia Samoylova, Marion Verboom & Enzo Cucchi

Grand Opening: Friday, 19 April 2024, 5–9 pm

Exhibition: 16 April – 3 August 2024

Wentrup is delighted to introduce the group exhibition "Capriccio," inaugurating its new venue in Venice during the 60th edition of the Biennale Arte in April 2024. The newly renovated space features the works of three female artists from the Wentrup roster - Mary Ramsden, Anastasia Samoylova, and Marion Verboom. Their works engage in a dialogue with Italian artist Enzo Cucchi, a key figure in the historic Italian Transavanguardia movement. This exhibition seeks to contextualize these artists' works within the historical and geographical backdrop of where they are shown, exploring the influences and references to Italy and Venice within them. The interaction with Enzo Cucchi further strengthens the connection with Italian art history, recognizing its inspiration for new generations of artists.

Capriccio, an Italian term borrowed from art history, refers to a genre popular in the Renaissance and Baroque periods. In this genre, real architecture blends with imaginary landscapes to create a realistic yet surreal effect. Interestingly, the renowned Renaissance Venetian artist Canaletto painted a capriccio depicting the Loggia of Palazzo Grifalconi Loredan, now home to Wentrup Venezia. Capriccio also translates to whim or delight, which resonates with Venice's festive and extravagant lifestyle throughout the centuries. This visual pun pervades the exhibition, as Capriccio represents the element of fantasy and imagination found in various forms in the displayed works.

Mary Ramsden's new series of abstract paintings explores the act of painting itself. She experiments with form compositions and color fields using various textures and patterns. These works incorporate color fillings and strokes inspired by literary and musical cues, which the artist channels through her emotions. This creates atmospheres reminiscent of Cucchi's work, where figures are often lost or immersed in surreal, emotionally vibrant fields. Delving into her compositions, a sense of familiarity gradually emerges. Her palette features the colors of the Venice canals and the city's grey winter skies, while her textures hint at the typical patterns of Venetian flooring.

Marion Verboom's sculptures merge figurative and non-figurative forms from various mythologies, architectures, and aesthetics, crafting hybrid figures and fantastical suggestions. Her ceramic sculptures

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intertwine organic shapes inspired by natural and anatomical realms with cryptic forms, giving birth to whimsical creatures. These sculptures carry a mystical charge, reminiscent of ritualistic objects, and resonate strongly with the mysterious beings that populate Cucchi's visionary atmospheres.

Anastasia Samoylova's photographic collages, with their visual language reflecting Florida's sparkling contradictions, find a vibrant counterpart in Venice's atmospheres and architecture, particularly through color. Indeed, the motifs seen in the exhibited works refer to Florida's architecture, which draws inspiration from Venice. They evoke a sense of alienation, ultimately appearing as surreal landscapes and fictitious, imaginary environments.

Cucchi's dreamlike visuals symbolize a significant period in Italy during the 1970s, marked by a return to figurative painting. His works, often a fusion of painting and ceramics, conjure up stories, mythologies, and places that straddle reality and dreams. The interaction with the sculptures, paintings, and photographs of the three young artists triggers a contemplation about figuration - its foundation, variations, challenges, and the artists' capacity to invent fantastical worlds.