



2 – 15 OCTOBER 2017

MERU ART*SCIENCE AWARD, 5th Edition

LAURENT GRASSO: SOLAR WIND

GAMeC – Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Bergamo

Opening: Monday, October 2nd, 7 p.m.

Sunday, October 8th, 3:30 p.m.

Awards Ceremony / Conference between Laurent Grasso and an ESA expert

GAMeC, Spazio Zero

From 2 to 15 October 2017 GAMeC – Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Bergamo is pleased to present *Solar Wind* by Laurent Grasso, the winning project of the fifth **MERU ART*SCIENCE AWARD**, promoted in collaboration with the **Fondazione MERU/Medolago-Ruggeri for biomedical research** and the **Associazione BergamoScienza** to reward and support the work of an artist and aimed at underscoring the bond between art and science.

Solar Wind – hosted in GAMeC's Spazio Zero – **is a video project that engages the viewer closely with the surface of the Sun.** It aims to explore the ambivalent relationship between humans and the Sun, which represents a source of life but equally a potential danger.

The fictional character of scientific discoveries related to solar storms and space meteorology has led **Laurent Grasso** – whose work revolves around concepts of science, faith and illusion – to delve into this subject for his research.

In October 2015, the US authorities released their *National Space Weather Action Plan*, and this study promoting an active policy of research and development in the field of space meteorology on a global scale aroused international interest in these phenomena.

Solar Wind, which recalls the geomagnetic storms that caused the 1989 blackout in Canada, will address our modern fears by **establishing a close connection between the unknown – embodied by solar winds – and their potential impact on Planet Earth.**

The work presented at GAMeC is in line with the original version of the project, which has been projected onto two Parisian silos belonging to cement manufacturer Ciments Calcia, as a permanent work of art since 2016.

The video is an extension of the permanent installation in Paris and works according to the same principles: thanks to an algorithm specifically generated for the occasion with the cooperation of CNES – Centre national d'études spatiales (National Centre for Space Studies), it creates a colourful mapping of solar activity obtained thanks to colour and light fluctuations, which translate and transmit it live on Earth.

Moreover, coming into contact with solar wind, all cosmic objects approaching Earth bring extra details into the work.

For the implementation of *Solar Wind*, Laurent Grasso worked with the **L'Observatoire de l'Espace** – the art-science laboratory of CNES –, which helped him to identify the scientific data he needed to create an algorithm accurate enough to react in real time to the data collected by scientists.

In particular, a new software processing the data has been specifically designed for the video format conceived for the 5th edition of MERU ART*SCIENCE AWARD.

Although the scientific scope of *Solar Wind* is indisputable, Laurent Grasso was inspired first and foremost by its poetic and driving forces.

Laurent Grasso's project has been chosen by a **jury** composed of

Anna Daneri, Fondazione MERU

Alessandro Bettonagli, Associazione BergamoScienza

Giacinto Di Pietrantonio, Director of GAMeC

Stefano Raimondi, Curator of GAMeC

for the poetic approach it uses to address a scientific theme of major importance, also exploiting the video medium in an innovative way as a tool for real-time encoding of scientific phenomena.

Solar Wind is part of the programming of the 15th BergamoScienza, one of the most important international science festivals, scheduled this year from 30 September to 15 October (www.bergamoscienza.it).

The work will enter GAMeC's Permanent Collection and the archives of the Fondazione MERU and the Associazione BergamoScienza.

The **Awards Ceremony** will take place on 8 October 2017, at 3:30 p.m., at GAMeC's Spazio Zero. It will be followed by a **conversation between Laurent Grasso and an ESA (European Space Agency) expert who discuss the subject matter inspiring the work.**

THE AWARD

The **MERU ART*SCIENCE AWARD** – born in 2013 from the collaboration of **GAMEC – Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Bergamo**, the **Fondazione MERU** and the **Associazione BergamoScienza** – represents important acknowledgement aimed at underscoring the ties between art and science, awarding and supporting the work of an artist invited to present a project that probes the relationship between these two areas.

According to the regulations, **participation is strictly by invitation**: for each edition, a **selected group of artists** – proposed by professionals in the field of contemporary art – must present a **work that has never been shown before**, conceived based on an assigned budget and specific requirements.

The competing works must be linked with the mission of the **Fondazione MERU – Fondazione Medolago-Ruggeri for biomedical research, a non-profit organization promoting scientific and biomedical research in the field of vascular biology**. The foundation, based in Bergamo, promotes research projects with a strong social focus and closely connected with areas such as the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases that strike us and cause physical, mental and emotional stress.

Invernomuto, Renaud Jerez, Sarah Sparkes and Jol Thomson were the winners of the past editions of MERU ART*SCIENCE AWARD.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE FIFTH EDITION

Along with **Laurent Grasso** (selected by **Hou Hanru**, Director Maxxi, Rome), the competitors for the fifth MERU ART*SCIENCE AWARD were:

Susanne Winterlin, selected by **João Ribas**, Deputy Director, Museu Fundação Serralves, Porto

Giacomo Raffaelli, selected by **Caterina Riva**, Curator and writer

Anto.Milotta and Zlatolin Donchev, selected by Gianluca and Massimiliano De Serio, Artists

Francesco Bertocco, selected by **Cristiana Perrella**, Curator and art critic

Edward Tomasson, selected by **Raphael Gyga**, Curator, Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich;

www.gamec.it • www.bergamoscienza.it • www.fondazionemeru.org

The exhibition is open daily from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Free admission

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