

Bellavita

28.07 | 15.08

New Chinatown Barbershop Gallery
930 N. Hill, Los Angeles

Curated by Denis Isaia and Cristina Natalicchio

Marcel Duchamp, it could have been that he was bored with chess or with America, in 1936 took all his works of art, reduced them to miniatures and created the *Boîte en valise*: the first portable exhibition in the history of art. Half for fun and half just to move along, we too thought of getting our exhibition into a suitcase and to move to Los Angeles for a month. The idea came to us a few months ago while chatting to the artist Mario Ybarra Jr. who, together with Karla Diaz, runs the Barbershop, an underground space where some of the best experimentations of the juvenile scene of Los Angeles are passing through. The idea right from the start was that of opening a window on Italian research. Geographic exhibitions are not very challenging and are often boring. Furthermore underground does not pay. So to liven up the project and gather enough resources to finance work and holiday we decided to ask the artists for a work of art that would fit into a suitcase and to close the exhibition with an auction. The project is called *Bellavita* and there are 33 artists, all Italian and all emerging. They have been invited to confront themselves with the idea of transportability, lightness and the possibility of transforming the physical limits of the project in works of art that are capable of convincing the Los Angeles public. The exhibition opens in the New Barbershop Gallery in Chinatown (a district which hosts other galleries and no-profit institutions) on 28th July, 2007 and closes on the evening of 15th August with the auction sale of the works of art. Mario Ybarra will be conducting this final event and will be acting in the unusual role of auctioneer in an event which highlights not only the market but also the exchange between communities in a district like this one in Los Angeles which has always been the great cultural and linguistic melting-pot. A catalogue with photos and starting prices of the works on show is available.

Artists Atrium-project, Simone Barresi, Stefano Bernardi, Rossella Biscotti, Dafne Boggeri, Luca Bolognesi, Carola Bonfili, **Stefano Cagol**, Jacopo Candotti, Andrea Dojmi, Michael Fliri, Rosario Fontanella, Stefania Galegati, Nicola Gobetto, Paolo Gonzato, Francesca Grilli, Hubert Kostner, Federico Maddalozzo, Stefano Mandracchia, Domenico Mangano, Philipp Messner, Nark bkb, Alessandro Nassiri, Laurina Paperina, Nicola Pecoraro, Matteo Peterlini, Sara Rossi, Cosimo Terlizzi, Simone Tosca, Luca Trevisani, Tu'm, Nico Vascellari, Italo Zuffi.

Further information:

The Barbershop is an art space placed on a street with 10 other art galleries. "What we want to do is facilitate artists' projects, whether this means emerging or developed artists". Together with the development of the artists' projects the Barbershop offers other activities: "Every Saturday afternoon, we held workshops for kids. We had discussion groups, an artist-in-residency program, and school groups that brought in students. We had front curatorial exhibitions, and we brought in young artists". A place to display work, to see artistry in action or even to get a cheap haircut.

Mario Ybarra Jr is artist and performer. His work has been featured in a number of institutional exhibitions, recently including *Alien Nation* at the ICA, London, curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, and the 2006 California Biennial, at the Orange County Museum of Art. 2007 he will participate in *The World as a Stage*, curated by Jessica Morgan at the Tate Modern, London.

Karla Diaz is a poet, performer and art critic. She has read her work and exhibited projects in venues throughout Southern California including the Getty Art Museum, REDCAT and the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles; the Center for Curatorial Studies Bard College, Hunter College in New York, the Serpentine Gallery in London and at the Zocalo in Mexico City. Karla writes for several art magazines including "Beautiful Decay" and the "Journal of Aesthetics" and "Protest". She is a founding member of Slangage.