



SOLITAIRE STÉPHANE THIDET

Anna Morettini is proud to present *Solitaire* by Stéphane Thidet, winner of the first edition of the Prize she created. The installation, first presented in Paris in 2016, now resonates in the Chiesa di Santa Monaca, a 15th century deconsecrated church.

I think that the minimal radicalness with which I approached this work creates tension in the relation between a place of worship and the void, the silence, while simultaneously questioning the authority of a situation. This project has specifically been realized in 2016 for and with the former Sacristy of the Collège des Bernardins and suggests a reflection on contemplation, meditation, space, as well as infinite movement proposed here with a certain fragility.

The door of the Sacristy of the Collège des Bernardins is closed. When it is half-opened and entered, one must necessarily wait a few minutes for the eyes to become accustomed to the darkness. The visitor finds himself standing on a threshold, a wooden platform with a barrier. Beyond it appears a dark and smooth surface like a mirror, very slightly blurred by the movement of two dead trees stumps suspended from large poles. These two mineralized trunks, taken from the Mediterranean beach where they had been stranded by the sea, carry their storm back into the silence of the Sacristy.

The question of silence as a real sound has been of prime importance for the conception of this project. I wanted to propose a space wherein the void is a presence and thus create an interstice of time suspended in the middle of reality. This suspension of time, as I propose it, is not without evoking this place of worship in the way silence must have weighted upon the cell of Savonarola at the Convent of San Marco. There is a will of minimalism in the approach I had with this project: only two elements interplay with the stones and the groin vault cross of the Sacristy. The skeletal silhouettes of these two large trees are reminiscent of the ossuaries found in many chapels or churches.

There is a will of "almost nothing" which seems to me sufficient to fill the space with a certain authority. Each tree stump turns slowly, like an ankylotic dervish turner. The surface of the water is blurred as the branches are slightly touching it, like a vinyl turntable arm on the groove of a silent black disc. By luminous reflection, a drawing appears on the stones of the Sacristy and disappears as quickly, as if each revolution caused the previous one to disappear. In this way, it evokes the Chinese practice of calligraphy on the ground with water in which the beginning of the poem disappears before the end is written.

The notion of vanity seems to me at the heart of this project which fails in giving any apprehension of permanence. The situation I propose oscillates between an imperturbable movement, a disturbing omen, a precarious balance, and an invitation to a certain possible form of meditation.

Stéphane Thidet

The Anna Morettini Prize rewards a curious look brought by a contemporary artist on the Florentine tradition. This competition that aims to develop each year a different theme related to the Florentine culture, wants to encourage the candidates to reflect on the parallels between what made magnificent Florence and the contemporary world. The Anna Morettini Prize, in its 2016-2017 edition, has submitted to artists of all nationalities the theme "Savonarola's Universe".

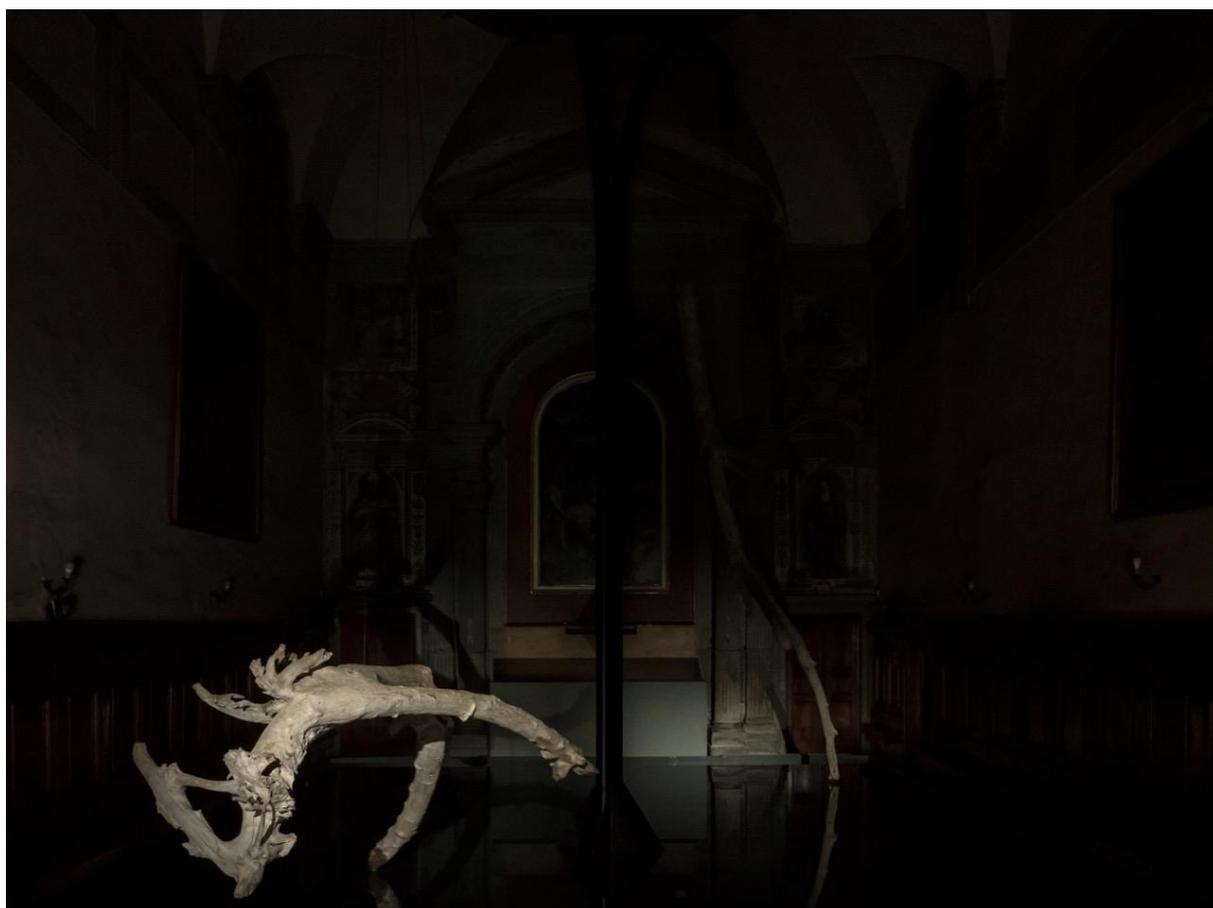
For this first edition, candidates have been invited to express their interpretation of the character but not only. "The Universe" evokes a feeling how the character perceived his society, or how his contemporaries admitted his religious and political role. The objective was to explore the thin line which Savonarola drew between fear and respect. The rejection of the new creative aspirations, the fierce disagreement with all the profane representations were to be compared with the strong search for spirituality and a deep respect for the divine message.



Biography

Stéphane Thidet, born in Paris in 1974, lives and works in Paris and Aubervilliers. He graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Paris in 2002 and the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Rouen in 1996. He teaches at the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Nantes. Stéphane Thidet has had solo shows at the Abbaye de Maubuisson, the Collège des Bernardins, La Maison Rouge and Le Palais de Tokyo, among other places, and participated to the Nuit Blanche, 2016 in Paris.

Stéphane Thidet is represented by the Galerie Aline Vidal in Paris, France and Galerie Laurence Bernard in Geneva, Switzerland.



The winner has been selected by the jury composed by :

Anna Morettini

Caterina Biagiotti – Director, Fondazione Biagiotti

Arturo Galansino – Director, Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi

Stefania Gori – Art Historian

Ludovica Sebgondi – Curator, Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi

Giandomenico Semeraro – Vice Director, School of Fine Arts, Florence

From January 20 to February 25, 2018

Open Thursday to Monday – 12 P.M. to 7 P.M.

Chiesa di Santa Monaca

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