ALMINE RECH

Les Citoyens
Uno sguardo di Guillermo Kuitca sulla collezione della Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain

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At the invitation of Triennale Milano and Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Guillermo Kuitca presents a personal selection of 120 works from the collection of the Parisian institution. Drawing from his unique perspective, the Argentinian artist curates an exhibition featuring installations, paintings, sculptures, ceramics, videos, and drawings. This collection creates a cosmogony composed of artworks, artists, animals, and objects, with a recurring presence of the human figure in its interactions with others and the world. The exhibition, titled "Les Citoyens," explores the themes of groups, collectives, and communities through a diverse range of contemporary creations, many of which have never been shown in Italy. Visitors are offered a sensitive and surprising journey, filled with new aesthetic encounters.

Guillermo Kuitca describes the exhibition as a community of artists coming together through their works to create a collective artwork. From the artist's viewpoint, "Les Citoyens" takes the audience on a journey where ideas of ensembles, constellations, groups, and communities intertwine. It presents a cosmogony of artworks, artists, animals, and objects, resembling a "solar system without a sun." Kuitca envisions a journey without themes, centers, or hierarchies, but instead, it is composed of connections that weave a network of meanings and sensations. The exhibition draws comparisons, such as between Cai Guo Qiang's monumental drawing and Artavazd Pelechian's film, evoking a communion of vulnerable animals resonating with the abstract presence of man in Fernell Franco's work. The miniature society of Véio's sculptures is juxtaposed with other works that embody the pervasive idea of constellations. Agnès Varda's spatial arrangement echoes videos portraying a community of women across ages, and chairs invite visitors to gather at their own pace, forming chance groups of observers.

The gaze is also a central theme in Tony Oursler's installation, immersing visitors in a forest of shamanic spirits. Photographer Daido Moriyama invites visitors to delve into his studio through an installation comprised of numerous Polaroids. The 3D universe of Moebius's film transports the human community to a new planet.

While the human figure is often present in the selected works, represented in groups painted by Moke or George Rouy, or sculpted by Isabel Mendes da Cunha, it assumes a silent character, even an absence that resonates with more abstract ensembles by artists like Richard Artschwager, Absalon, José Vera Matos, or Thomas Demand. Abstraction and the dissolution of the body are also apparent in Francesca Woodman's photographs and David Lynch's nudes, as well as Yanomami artist Taniki's drawings.

Works by Rinko Kawauchi and Virxilio Vieitez evoke the universal concept of the family unit and the community formed by diverse personalities and multiple temporalities. Guillermo Kuitca explores the idea of combinations, entities, and units through the works of David Hammons, Junya Ishigami, Allan McCollum, Vija Celmins, and Hu Liu, playing with repetition, singularity, wholeness, and fragmentation.

The installation titled "David's living-room revisited" (2014-2020), a collaborative work between Guillermo Kuitca, David Lynch, and Patti Smith, exemplifies the idea of community interwoven throughout the exhibition. Completing the tour, Claudia Andujar's photographs evoke the spirit of the Fondation Cartier and its enduring dialogue with artists over almost four decades.

The exhibition "Les Citoyens" serves as a testament to the richness and uniqueness of the Fondation Cartier's collection. Originating from the institution's inception, the collection now encompasses over 2,000 works by 500 artists from 50 different nationalities. It distinguishes itself through the singular principles that guide its development each year. The majority of the collection comprises works presented as part of the Fondation Cartier's programming, including commissioned works from artists. Reflecting its history, programming choices, and commitment to diversity, the collection represents nearly four decades of international contemporary art, spanning from African painting to Japanese and Bolivian architecture, Italian design to Amerindian drawings, and from masters of American photography to emerging European visual artists.

Guillermo Kuitca, with the exhibition "Les Citoyens," adds a significant chapter to his history with the collection, which began in Paris in 2014 with the exhibition "Les Habitants." This exhibition showcases his distinctive artistic spirit and highlights his close connections with various geographical contexts. In 2017, the Fondation Cartier invited him to continue the narrative in Buenos Aires with the exhibition "Les Visitants" at the CCK. In this second opus, he presents a series of monographs that emphasize another characteristic of the collection: its ability to bring together extensive groups of works, a testament to the long-term relationships the Foundation fosters with artists. With "Les Citoyens," Guillermo Kuitca weaves the exhibition around the theme of community, playing with the relationships between works, the energy that unites them, and the harmonious interplay between them. Designed as a polyphony of works and voices, the exhibition offers a journey into the memory of the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, as seen through the eyes of the artist.