

The Alberto Peruzzo Foundation and the University of Padua Botanical Garden

present

Quayola
SECOND NATURE

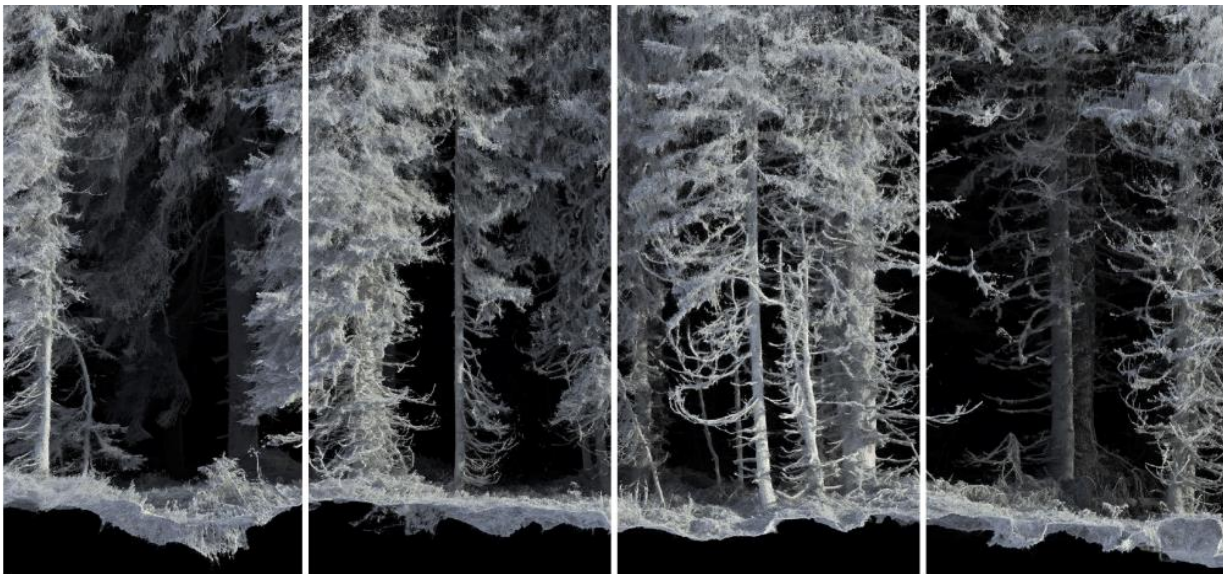
An exhibition with selected works from the series *Remains* and *Jardins d'Été*

With a critical essay by Lucia Longhi

And the support of the Galleria Marignana Arte of Venice

Botanical Garden of Padua – Unesco Heritage Site
Via Orto Botanico 15, Padua

14 November 2019 – 6 January 2020
Opening: Wednesday 13 November, 6 PM



Second Nature is an exhibition by the artist Quayola (Rome, 1982) that aims at offering a new interpretation of the vegetal world through contemporary eyes in a historic place that is one of the most famous witnesses of the evolution of botany.

The project arises from a collaboration between the Alberto Peruzzo Foundation and the University of Padua Botanical Garden with the support of Galleria Marignana Arte of Venice.

Through a practice focused on nature and drawing from classical artistic tradition, Quayola's works investigate the digital languages of interpretation and encoding of reality, involving technology on the formal as well as conceptual level. The project thus enhances the place hosting it, emblematic of the research on the urgencies of our day, thanks to the progress of its scientific activities.

Quayola's digital works from the series *Remains* and *Jardins d'Été*, in which flowers and forests are the subjects, interact with the places of the ancient Botanical Garden in an exchange that is not merely esthetic. The project, in fact, discloses connections between the artist's practice, the Garden's scientific tradition, and the most cogent issues concerning the evolutionary direction of the human species and the planet.

Quayola's work, recognized worldwide, is characterized by its highly contemporary sign while it is also linked to European artistic tradition. In fact, the artist explores reality through the eyes of the computer, offering us a "second nature" to observe, different from the one to which our human experience has accustomed us.

Today our knowledge of the world is not on a human scale alone and Quayola's images associate subjective human vision with that of the machine. The term "second nature" is also a reference, in the History of Thought, to the status of the human being, that differs from the "first nature" precisely in virtue of its intellectual and cultural abilities.

In *Jardins d'Été* we see digital paintings that remind us of the Impressionists. However, the brushstrokes here are created by algorithms processed by a software.

Similarly, in *Remains* the forest is represented by data collected with a 3D scanner. The data is then rendered in the form of millions of white dots.

This results in hybrid images, ranging from faithful reproduction to digital processing.

Like a classical painter, the artist uses the natural element as a pretext to explore a new logic of representation, that of the computer.

The author therefore explores new systems for reading reality, by positioning them within the classical legacy, especially that of *en plein air* painting, thus becoming part of the history of art.

Quayola explores the artistic practice while pursuing a scientific investigation. In light of this, once again his approach dialogues with History, presenting a similarity with the method of the 16th century scientists - above all, Leonardo da Vinci. In their *herbaria*, plant descriptions were in fact enriched with detailed illustrations: drawings in which the artistic exercise was functional to the scientific study. The approach to reality, and therefore to science, was first of all visual: painting allowed science to read nature and understand it. A vision of art as a method of scientific study.

In a sort of reverse process, Quayola uses nature to understand science. Today, in his representation of nature, we find a contemporary vision of the collaboration between art and science.

The botanical garden contains both the past and the research addressed to progress. Similarly, Quayola's work involves historical heritage and contemporary practice aimed at understanding the future.

Remains: Vallée de Joux is a work commissioned by Audemars Piguet.

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PRATICAL INFORMATION

Quayola

SECOND NATURE

Botanical Garden of Padua—Unesco Heritage Site

via Orto Botanico 15, Padua

14 November 2019 – 6 January 2020

Open every day from 9 AM to 5 PM, except Mondays (open on 6 January, closed 25 December and 1 January)

Ticket for the Botanical Garden: full rate 10€; reduced 8€ and 5€

www.ortobotanicopd.it

www.fondazionealbertoperuzzo.it

Quayola

Quayola (Rome, 1982) lives and works between London and Rome.

He uses technology as a lens to explore the tensions and balances between apparently opposite forces. Building immersive installations, he reinvents traditional images through the most advanced technology: Hellenistic sculpture, the great masters' paintings, Baroque architecture are some of the starting points for Quayola's abstract compositions. Nature is also integral to his work. Observing landscapes and natural patterns by means of advanced technologies, not only does he explore reality: he also delivers different ways of perceiving it. This new nature is a hybrid between human and machine perception. His practice derives from custom softwares and includes audiovisual performances, video, sculpture and works on paper. His work has been exhibited in museums and institutions all over the world, including V&A Museum, London; Park Avenue Armory, New York; Bozar, Brussels; National Art Center, Tokyo; UCCA, Beijing; How Art Museum, Shanghai; SeMA, Seoul; Bienal, San Paolo; Triennale, Milan; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona. Quayola also collaborated in many sound projects, working with composers, orchestras, and musicians, including the London Contemporary Orchestra and Ensemble Intercontemporain.

In 2013 he was awarded the Golden Nica ad Ars Electronica.

Botanical Garden of Padua

The Botanical Garden of Padua was founded by the University of Padua in 1545 for the culture of medicinal plants, and is the oldest university botanical garden in the world. It is also known as "the garden of simples", because at first it was created only for the cultivation of medicinal plants (called "simples" in the Middle Ages) used for producing medicines. The Padua garden represented a fundamental breakthrough in the history of medicine and botanical science, as well as a famous example of the new esthetic canons of the Renaissance for garden architecture.

Its original design consists of a central circumference, symbolizing the world, surrounded by a ring of water. Inside the circumference there is a square, divided in four units by orthogonal paths, oriented in keeping with the main cardinal directrices. This form is a representation of the universe used since Antiquity and recalls the design of the Renaissance ideal city. The Padua Botanical Garden, which still plays a crucial role within the University activities, is run by the University of Padua. It has always been a source of inspiration for other gardens in Italy and Europe, both for the architectural and functional design, and the didactic and scientific approach to the study of medicinal plants and connected disciplines. Since 1997 it features on the list of UNESCO Heritage Sites and in 2014 it opened to the public the Garden of Biodiversity, a living atlas of the vegetal world.

Alberto Peruzzo Foundation

This is a non-profit institution founded by the entrepreneur Alberto Peruzzo that aims at the diffusion of contemporary art, while encouraging and promoting our artistic heritage.

Since 2011 the Alberto Peruzzo Foundation has been promoting projects of national and international relevance. One example, in partnership with Louis Vuitton, is the restoration of the Venice Pavilion in the Giardini, a physical but also symbolic place. The Foundation then engaged in protecting and restoring the historical patrimony - the Church of Sant'Agnese in Padua being another concrete example. This was followed by the promotion of contemporary artists (*Alberto Biasi. Between Reality and Imagination* in Venice for the 2019 Art Biennale), and modern ones (*Guernica, Icon of Peace* with Picasso's cartoon at Palazzo Camerini in Padua in the fall of 2018). The Foundation also supports experimental expressions, such as *Human Architecture* at the 2018 Architecture Biennale.

Sant'Agnese in Padua, an 11th-century church, has been under restoration since 2013. When completed in 2020 it will become the home of the Alberto Peruzzo Foundation, as well as a place of culture and dialogue between classical and contemporary art.