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# JULIET

## Carmina Burrata by Robert Janitz at the desecrated San Carlo church in Cremona

by RITA MESCHIARI • 29 DECEMBER 2022 • REVIEWS

The site-specific installation project, created in collaboration with APALAZZOGALLERY, continues with Robert Janitz's dialogue between painting and exhibition space. "What does 'white cube' mean? What effect does this type of space have on its content? Is it a neutral space? A space built for commercial purposes? Or is it a sacred space?"



Robert Janitz, installation view *Carmina Burrata*, San Carlo Cremona, Cremona, Italy, 2022. Courtesy the artist, König Galerie and Apalazzogallery. Ph: Form Group

Robert Janitz asks himself these questions, and from them arise the fruits of his research and his recent willingness to experiment with different types of exhibition spaces. The German artist, now based in Mexico City, began this research path in 2021 at Casa Gilardi, a modernist jewel by Luis Barragan, where his works are integrated with an environment characterized by brightly colored walls and unusual juxtapositions of textures and materials.



Robert Janitz, installation view from *Best of All Worlds* at Casa Gilardi, Mexico City, 2021. Courtesy the artist

Subsequently, Janitz continued his exhibition experiments first at Villa Ipranosyan in Istanbul, an ornate 19th-century villa, then, in early summer 2022, inside Diego Rivera's pre-Columbian Museo Anahuacalli, arriving today to the deconsecrated 17th-century church of San Carlo in Cremona. Here, the exhibition titled "Carmina Burrata" stands as the fourth site-specific installation curated by New York-based artist Servane Mary and features a cycle of twelve paintings arranged on an architecture designed by the artist. To date, the San Carlo project has hosted the works of Servane Mary with the exhibition titled "Glitches", followed by the sculpture created by Mark Handforth titled "White- Light-Whirlwind" and Dara Friedman, with "The Tiger's Tail", which offered an immersive video art and performance work to end now with Robert Janitz's painting in "Carmina Burrata".



Robert Janitz, photography: Gökhan Polat for Collecteurs, courtesy The Museum of Private Collections

Janitz, known for his large abstract paintings made with oil, wax and flour on a monochromatic background, makes six black and white paintings and six color paintings divided on opposite sides of the installation. The structure is imposing and cuts diagonally and along its entire length the central nave of the church. The shape is that of a railway bridge or a Roman aqueduct with tall, slender arches. Walking through the room, the visitor is led through the empty arches, alternating between viewing the black and white paintings, more in keeping with the colors of the church and visible right from the entrance, and the paintings hidden by the architecture and almost psychedelic colors. Rhythm and surprise are punctuated by the succession of side chapels of St. Charles Church whose architecture is perfectly reflected in Janitz's installation. The use of black and white, so rare in the artist's practice, dialogues with the vast deconsecrated spaces.



Robert Janitz, installation view *Carmina Burrata*, San Carlo Cremona, Cremona, Italy, 2022. Courtesy the artist, König Galerie and Apalazzogallery. Ph: Form Group

Mark Handforth before Janitz decided to intervene on the great void of St. Charles Church by making “White- Light-Whirlwind,” which is a sixteen-meter-high installation composed of neon lights superimposed on each other to create a vortex that culminated in the center of the church’s Baroque dome. With “Carmina Burrata,” Janitz, too, decides to intervene in the void and exploits it to create an installation that gives prominence and emphasizes the profiles of the church’s arches, enhancing its architecture and creating smaller, minimal bays enclosed in a Baroque container. Janitz’s abstract style is set against the complexity of the now decaying and peeling decorations that surround it, creating different levels of juxtaposition between the paintings and between them and the surrounding space giving further evidence of the variety of possible results in juxtaposing his works against an exhibition space as unique as St. Charles Church.

Rita Meschiari

Info:

Robert Janitz, *Carmina Burrata*

24/09/2022 – 10/01/2023

SAN CARLO

Via Bissolati 33, 26100 Cremona

info@sancarlocremona.com



Rita Meschiari

Rita Meschiari (Modena, 1994) graduated in languages in 2019 and then embarked on a training course in the field of art curation, with in-depth studies in contemporary art history and critical writing. Having completed the ICON 2020 curator course, offered by the Modena Arti Visive Foundation, today she deals with the organization of projects relating to contemporary art, with particular attention to the use of video-photographic practices. Among others, she collaborated with ReA! Art Fair and Centrale Festival.