

In the Beginning ... the Word became flesh
Pavilion of the Holy See – Biennale Arte 2015

A dialectic dynamism in three voices

There are two hubs around which the project for the Pavilion of the Vatican rotates and takes its form: the *Logos* and the *flesh*. The *Logos* establishes a relationship, a harmony, a mediation; the *flesh* imposes immanence, a track, a process of embodiment.

Their inseparable unity produces a dialectic dynamism, irregular, elliptical, abruptly accelerating, precipitously slowing down, to solicit in the artists as in the public, a reflection on a combination that lies at the root of humanity itself.

Three artists, all young, from different backgrounds, with different experiences, vision, ethics and aesthetics, brought together to give body to the *In the Beginning ...* evoked by the Prologue of John's Gospel.

Monika Bravo, a Colombian by birth, with international training but American by adoption, has skillfully come up and elaborated a narrative which can be assembled and reassembled on 6 screens and as many transparent panels, placed on strongly colored walls. Nature, the Word, written and spoken, and Artistic abstraction present themselves in every composition as active elements of a heuristic vision, open to a degree of uncertainty in the development of a new experimental perception of space and a sensory fullness, through the grace and the "manual" poetry with which the artist uses technological media.

The young Macedonian Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva's research blends craftsmanship, scientific knowledge and a powerful aesthetic vision. She has designed a monumental architectural installation for the Pavilion, whose "fabric" is almost a skin, a mantle, which welcomes visitors both in a physical and symbolic dimension at the same time. Realized with organic waste materials in a way which leads from the ready-made to the re-made, the artist creates a cloth that is both an embroidery and surface skin, physical presence and transparency, an instrument of suggestion and surprise.

The *flesh* gains importance in the return to reality without falsification in the photographs of the thirty year old Mário Macilau. The series of nine photographs in black and white, taken in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, where the artist was born and works, are dedicated to the street children who still are living on the streets as means of survival. This is not a documentary, but a poetic work that transforms the relationship between the now and the past, the near and far, the visible and the invisible. The theme of the origin and the end of each artistic act is driven by the power of the photographic composition to confront the agony of the real.

Micol Forti, Curator of the Pavilion