

Monica Bonvicini

Power Joy Humor Resistance

curated by Adriana Rispoli

11 December 2020 - 28 February 2021

Power Joy Humor Resistance is an impressive light installation created by Monica Bonvicini for the Italian Cultural Institute C.M. Lerici in Stockholm.

The language, the use of industrial materials, the interest in architecture and gender equality are the distinctive features of Monica Bonvicini's work, which can also be found in the large neon sign *Power Joy Humor Resistance*. Between 2019 and 2020, the artist worked on a series of drawings on paper investigating the feminist anger as a positive energy. It is therefore not surprising that this large neon sign is inspired by the book “Rage Becomes Her. The Power of Women’s Anger” by Soraya Chemaly, American journalist and women's rights activist. *Power Joy Humor Resistance* also follows the events that have marked this 2020. In fact, the installation can be considered as a sign of participation in the international movement Black Lives Matter and in the LGTBQA + community, and also as a wish for a lighter post-Covid19 future, even not comfortable. By placing the neon sign in the most visible point of the building designed by Gio Ponti in Stockholm, Monica Bonvicini exploits the power of commercial semiotics aiming to send a positive message in the darkness of the long Swedish winter.

Monica Bonvicini studied art in Berlin and at Cal Arts, Valencia, CA. Since 2003 she holds a position as Professor for Performative Arts and Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. Beginning in October 2017 she assumes the professorship for sculpture at the Universität der Künste, Berlin. She lives and works in Berlin. Monica Bonvicini emerged as visual artist and started exhibiting internationally in the mid-1990s. Her multifaceted practice—which investigates the relationship between architecture, power, gender, space, surveillance and control—is translated into works that question the meaning of making art, the ambiguity of language, and the limits and possibilities attached to the ideal of freedom. Dry-humored, direct, and imbued with historical, political and social references, Bonvicini’s art never refrains from establishing a critical connection with the sites where it is exhibited, the materials that comprise it, and the roles of spectator and creator. This approach,

which has been at the core of her production since her first solo exhibition at the California Institute of the Arts in 1991, has formally evolved over the years without betraying its analytical force and inclination to challenge the viewer's perspective while taking hefty sideswipes at socio-cultural conventions. Bonvicini has earned several awards, including the Golden Lion at the Biennale di Venezia (1999); the Preis der Nationalgalerie für junge Kunst, from the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (2005); the Rolandpreis für Kunst for art in the public from the Foundation Bremen, Germany (2013), the Hans Platschek Prize for art and writing, Germany (2019), the Oskar Kokoschka Prize, Austria (2020). Her work has been featured in many prominent biennials, including Berlin (1998, 2004, 2014), La Triennale Paris (2012), Istanbul (2003, 2017), Gwangju (2006), New Orleans (2008), and Venice (1999, 2001, 2005, 2011, 2015). She has had solo exhibitions at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris (2002), Modern Art Oxford, England (2003), Secession, Vienna (2003), Staedtisches Museum Abteiberg (2005, 2012), Sculpture Center (2007), the Art Institute of Chicago (2009), the Kunstmuseum Basel (2009), Frac des Pays de la Loire (2009), the Kunsthalle Fridericianum in Kassel (2011), Centro de Arte Contemporaneo de Málaga, Spain (2011), the Deichtorhallen Hamburg (2012), BALTIC Center for Contemporary Art (2016), Berlinische Galerie (2017), Belvedere 21 (2019) and Kunsthalle Bielefeld (2020). In 2012 Bonvicini has been appointed Commander of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic. She is currently represented by Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich; König Galerie, Berlin; Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna; Galleria Raffaella Cortese, Milan; and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York

The installation *Power Joy Humor Resistance* was conceived as part of the 16th Giornata del Contemporaneo (Contemporary Day) promoted by AMACI. Placed on the roof of the building designed by Gio Ponti in Stockholm and inaugurated in 1958, this work closes a trilogy of site-specific installations created by Italian contemporary artists: a series of interventions that aim to promote and enhance Italian contemporary art abroad and to highlight the public role of the Institute Italian Culture in Stockholm, a place of dialogue and meeting between two cultures.

For more information, please visit the Institute's website: www.iicstoccolma.esteri.it