

The Fondazione Nicola Trussardi presents
RUBBLE AND REVELATION
the first major solo exhibition
in Italy by
CYPRIEN GAILLARD
curated by Massimiliano Gioni

Caserma XXIV Maggio
Via Vincenzo Monti 59, Milan
13 November – 16 December 2012
opening Tuesday 13 November, 6 PM

FONDAZIONE
NICOLA
TRUSSARDI

From 13 November to 16 December, the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi is proud to present *Rubble and Revelation*, curated by Massimiliano Gioni, it is the first major solo exhibition by **Cyprien Gaillard** in Italy.

The French artist's new project is housed in the military bakery of **Caserma XXIV Maggio**, a fascinating gem of industrial architecture built in Romanesque Revival style in 1898 and closed in 2005, after having been used for over a century to supply bread to all the military complexes in Lombardy, and after nourishing the entire city of Milan during World War II.

In just a few years, **Cyprien Gaillard** (Paris, 1980) has emerged as one of the most interesting artists of his generation, winning highly prestigious awards such as the **Prize for Young Art** from the **National Gallery in Berlin** (2011) and the **Marcel Duchamp Prize** from Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris (2010); he has already exhibited in the world's most respected museums (the **Tate Modern in London**, the **Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin**, the **MoMA in New York**, and the **New Museum in New York**); and has taken part in leading international events such as the **Venice Biennale**, the **Gwangju Biennale** and the **Berlin Biennale**.

Conceived for the military bakery of **Caserma XXIV Maggio**, *Rubble and Revelation* presents a selection of new and recent works that reflect on destruction and deterioration, leading us on a journey through the past and present, amid cultures and contexts that bear the scars of violent transformation and the hallmarks of collapse.

Like an archeologist probing the wreckage of modernity, Cyprien Gaillard travels the world in search of modern-day monuments, documenting their life and gradual decline with the precision of a scholar. He roams from continent to continent, immortalizing these ruins and relics in photos, videos, sculptures, and collages that convey his obsession with the poetry of decay. They are pieces that tell of the calm after the storm; to trace the roots of dramatic social changes, Gaillard compiles a vast archive of images in which every detail is a shard of collective memory, a scrap of choral history. He explores the power of images and the fear they can inspire: iconoclasm and vandalism are recurring themes in his work, which also betrays a profound interest in the perennial process of erasure and rewriting that landmarks and icons undergo throughout history, a process all the more topical in an era rocked by street protests and natural disasters.

Architecture, with its globalized commercial symbols and its effigies of power, is a discipline that fascinates Gaillard with its potential to deeply influence human behavior. Modernist buildings, rundown neighborhoods on the outskirts of town, crumbling highrises and skyscrapers, and military fortresses and bunkers become the stage set for a *Natural History of Destruction* (to cite German writer W.G. Sebald's essays on the devastation wreaked by air raids during World War II); within it, the artist highlights the dynamics that govern social interactions and relationships between the individual and the group. Youth subcultures and urban tribes play a central role in Gaillard's sociological explorations of our cities: often, in his work, categories such as freedom and the individual right to choose seem to no longer apply, since everything moves as if guided by mass will.

These forces can all be found at work in *Rubble and Revelation*, his project for the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi. Inside the spaces of the **Caserma XXIV Maggio** military bakery, with their patina of memories,

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Cyprien Gaillard leads us through his evocative vision of the ruins of our time: in a constant crescendo of juxtapositions and layerings, the videos, photographs, images and sounds trace a path that weaves between explosions and silences, devastation and contemplation.

With *Rubble and Revelation*, the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi continues the nomadic mission that has led it to explore Milan since 2003, rediscovering forgotten places and hidden treasures in the heart of the city and bringing them back to life through the visions of contemporary artists. After major solo shows by Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset, Darren Almond, Maurizio Cattelan, John Bock, Urs Fischer, Anri Sala, Paola Pivi, Martin Creed, Pawel Althamer, Peter Fischli and David Weiss, Tino Sehgal, Tacita Dean, Paul McCarthy, and Pipilotti Rist, the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi is proud to be presenting a large-scale exhibition by Cyprien Gaillard for the first time in Italy.

For detailed description of exhibited works on view see the attached booklet.

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BASIC INFO

Title: *Rubble and Revelation*

Artist: Cyprien Gaillard

Location: Caserma XXIV Maggio
Via Vincenzo Monti 59, Milan

Period: 13 November – 16 December 2012
The exhibition is open every day from 10 AM to 8 PM
Free admission

Curated by: Massimiliano Gioni
Artstic Director, Fondazione Nicola Trussardi

For more information, please contact:

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CHECKLIST

ROOM 1

Gates, 2012

frottages on paper

82 x 107 cm

Courtesy Sprüth Magers Berlin London

ROOMS 2 – 3

New Picturesque, 2012

postcards, paper

collages, 20 x 28 x 2,8 cm each

Courtesy Sprüth Magers Berlin London

ROOM 4

The Lake Arches, 2007

video DVD, color, silent

loop: 1 min 39 sec

Courtesy Sprüth Magers Berlin London / Bugada & Cargnel, Paris / Laura Bartlett Gallery, London

ROOMS 5 – 6

Millions into Darkness, 2012

showcases, pieces of meteorites, b/w photographs

130 x 130 x 90 cm each

Courtesy Sprüth Magers Berlin London

ROOM 7

Pruitt-Igoe Falls, 2009

video DVD, color, silent

loop: 6 min 55 sec

Courtesy Sprüth Magers Berlin London / Bugada & Cargnel, Paris / Laura Bartlett Gallery, London

ROOMS 8 - 10

Geographical Analogies, 2006 - 2011

mixed media

3 tables, 66 boxes, 65 x 48 x 10 cm each

Courtesy Sprüth Magers Berlin London / Bugada & Cargnel, Paris / Laura Bartlett Gallery, London

ROOM 11

Real Remnants of Fictive Wars V, 2004

35mm film

loop: 7 min 15 sec

Courtesy Sprüth Magers Berlin London / Bugada & Cargnel, Paris / Laura Bartlett Gallery, London

ROOMS 1 – 11

Salem

Prelude (Dragged), 2012

sound installation

loop: 7 min

© Cyprien Gaillard, Salem

Courtesy Sprüth Magers Berlin London

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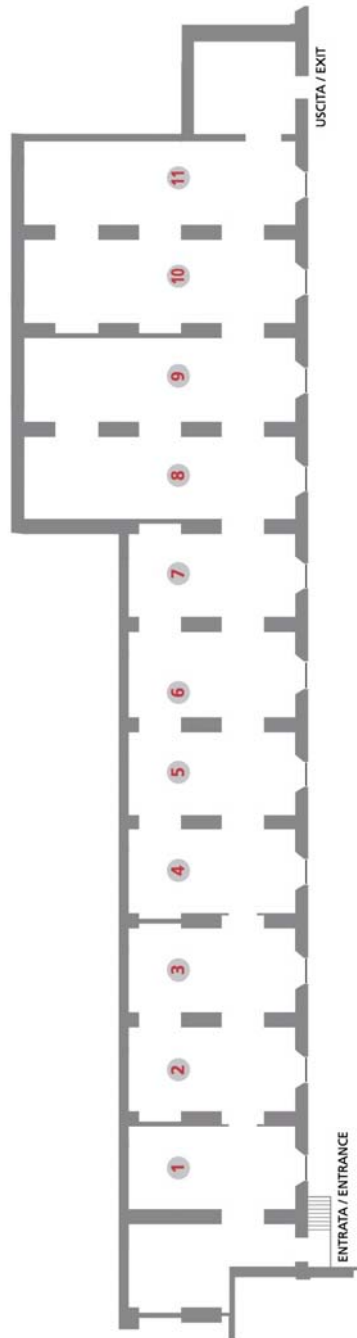
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All exhibited artworks

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CYPRIEN GAILLARD QUOTES

"You have to be irreverent to monuments."

"My interest in landscape started early on when I was a teenager. I was doing two different kinds of activities that actually don't show in my work. In a sense my art digested both: graffiti and skateboarding. This was my first relationship to landscape."

"I always go through this process of understanding all the things that are wrong about a landscape or monument, and how they have been restored or preserved. What is the recent history of these places, what has been done in the past fifty years or so? I am interested in the things you can not read in the books."

"You not only look at a landscape, you confront yourself as much as you can... You will destroy it in order to reveal it or have a relation to it."

"I want to reclaim these demolitions on a human scale. If you think about it, especially in France, the history of destruction through revolution and riots – this was always a situation where people would attack state buildings. Always, from the French 2005 riots to May '68 back to the French Revolution. But now the state builds, and the state demolishes. So my question is: *What space does the state leave for revolutionary destruction by conducting all these controlled demolitions?* They appropriate that right to build and to tear down in a very spectacular way, a way everyone can relate to. This is what I want to do in my films. I want to reclaim demolition as revolutionary, on my side..."

"The moment when buildings fall is so spectacular that it erases everything... It eclipses history. It eclipses all the problems. It justifies everything. It is Machiavellian: the end justifies everything. It works as a kind of public amnesia."

"Every time I visit a city, the first museums I visit are the archeological, anthropological, or natural history museums. I have a general interest in artifacts and fragments, and archaeology in the Western world, which is also closely linked to colonialism. Looking at archaeology and asking the question: *Why is this artifact to be found here, in a Western city?* also raises the question of colonialism."

"A romantic architect or a romantic urban planner would be much more original than a romantic artist. All artists are romantic, in that sense. For choosing to make art above all other options... I guess maybe compared to the practice of most artists working in their studios, I might be a little bit more romantic because I spend my time outside, because I sometimes confront myself with the landscape – I actually put myself on the scale within the landscape, me as a person, to measure myself against the landscape. I think this could be romantic, this idea of scale."

"I see vandals and land artists as romantics. They do destroy things and can appear at first as machos but when you look at the big picture of what I call the map of destruction, and you see how buildings are blown up every week around Paris, that the harbor of Rotterdam extends twelve miles into the ocean, or even more recently the BP oil rig blowing up in the Gulf of Mexico, you understand that all these individual acts of vandalism are quickly put in perspective by white collar/official acts of vandalism happening on a much, much bigger scale."

"I think that the good land art has always been vandalism. This whole idea is really important to my work. What is an individual act of vandalism and how an act of vandalism can become bigger and official, either validated by art or by bureaucracy for private developers."

"The utopias are all dead. They were all dead before I was born. But isn't that what postmodern architecture stands for? The remedy to the latest failure of architectural utopias? I mean, utopias are not only dead with these concrete buildings. It is a constant process of failure and recovery. You can't seriously think that it was only modernism that raised the big question of failure. Modernism was also slum clearance."

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"I think my work is a celebration of modern human signs, like a 21st century archaeological expedition of where archaeologists don't have to fight against vegetation, since it's all gone, but instead to fight against nostalgia always growing back."

"My work starts where and when the archaeologists left off."

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CYPRIEN GAILLARD

Cyprien Gaillard was born in Paris in 1980, studied in Lausanne, and is now based in Berlin.

He has won numerous prizes and awards for emerging artists, including the Prize for Young Art from the National Gallery in Berlin (2011); the Marcel Duchamp Prize from Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, the Karl Ströher Prize (2010); and the Audi Talent Award (2007).

His photographs, videos, sculptures and collages have been featured in personal exhibitions and projects at the world's most famous museums—including the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris (2011, 2008); the KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin, the Centre Georges Pompidou in Metz, the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh (2011); the Zollamt/MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt, the Kunsthalle in Basel (2010); the Kunsthalle Fridericianum in Kassel (2009); and the Hayward Gallery Project Space in London (2008)—and group exhibitions at venues such as the Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart in Berlin, the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo (2011); the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, the MoMA in New York, the ICA - Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia, the Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art in Rotterdam (2010); the Generali Foundation in Vienna, the Tate Modern in London, the White Columns, and the New Museum in New York (2009).

He has taken part in prestigious contemporary art festivals such as the 54th Venice Biennale (2011); the Gwangju Biennale in South Korea (2010); the 3rd Moscow Biennale (2009); the 5th Berlin Biennale (2008); and the Biennale de Lyon (2007).

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CASERMA XXIV MAGGIO

Designed in 1889 and opened in 1897, **Caserma XXIV Maggio** is part of a large military district, originally called the "Quartiere delle Milizie" and later the "Distretto Militare di Milano", built in the late nineteenth century in a middle-class neighbourhood of downtown Milan, near Parco Sempione, between Via Mascheroni and Via Vincenzo Monti.

The Distretto, whose jurisdiction covered 439 municipalities, operated out of Milan for over 140 years, becoming such an important part of Milanese life that in 1918, the city government entrusted it with the Risorgimento-era banner of the National Guard of Milan (founded in 1848 after the five-day uprising against Austrian rule), and in October 1991, as an additional sign of this close bond, conferred honorary citizenship on the institution.

Caserma XXIV Maggio, the current headquarters of the Army Command for Lombardy, started out as a **military bakery**, in a Romanesque Revival building from 1898 that is a true gem of industrial architecture. The first floor above street level still houses seven well-preserved, spacious ovens that culminate in six tall chimneys, running through the inside of the building and soaring up from its roof like elegant red-brick smokestacks. On the middle floor were storerooms for raw ingredients, while the second floor held five flour mills. A chute connected the upper and lower levels. The complex was therefore capable of handling every step in the bread-making process, from grinding the wheat to baking the loaves. The military bakery—which allowed many young men to learn the milling and baking trades during their period of military service—was used for over a century to supply bread to all the military complexes in Lombardy, and during World War II, to nourish the entire city of Milan. It definitively ceased operation only in the late Fifties.

Caserma XXIV Maggio, on the other hand, remained operative until 2004, and over the years housed all the young men of Milan who were called up for the three-day selection for military service: one finds famous images from the Sixties of young girls flocked around the Via Mascherone gate, hoping to catch a glimpse of singers like Adriano Celentano and Tony Renis, or up-and-coming football stars like Gianni Rivera.

After compulsory military service was suspended in 2005, the Distretto Militare was converted in 2007 into a documentation center housing an archive of some 2,000,000 files, one for every male citizen of Lombardy born between 1925 and 1985 who was called up for service and spent part of his life in this building.

With the show *Rubble and Revelation* by Cyprien Gaillard, Milan's Caserma XXIV Maggio is opening its doors to civilians for the very first time: a unique opportunity to see inside a symbolic landmark that has played a vital role in the recent history of the city, and is deeply rooted in the hearts and memories of its residents.

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