

Prinz Gholam



Studio 1



My Heart is a Poised Cithara

**Mon cœur est un luth suspendu;
Sitôt qu'on le touche il résonne.**

Pierre-Jean de Béranger

This excerpt of a song by Pierre-Jean de Béranger (1780—1857) was cited as an introduction by Edgar Allan Poe to his short novel *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

On a second level we borrowed the epigraph and adapted it. Relating a musical instrument to an affective and corporeal state. We strike the chords of a cithara to a movement of the body, to underline a posture, or to highlight a moment. The site was Palazzo Altemps in Rome. While working we called it *The House of Palazzo Altemps*.

During the long drawing periods on 2×2 meters hung canvas (which went about 6 to 7 weeks) we added leaves of bay laurel gradually. For they were growing in every park and garden, and on street sides. When it rained their scent floated everywhere. These leaves are symbolically related to Apollo, the god of music in ancient mythology. We applied them on the canvas, so as to depict the resonance of sound in the drawing.



My Heart is a Poised Cithara, 2020.

Color pencil on canvas, laurel leaves, 215 x 200 cm. Courtesy the artists and Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris.

My Heart is a Poised Cithara. Performance, October 28 and 31, 2020, *Palazzo Altemps*, Rome, duration 80 min. Courtesy Ministero della cultura — Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Altemps.



In *The House of Palazzo Altemps* the sculptures represent mythological authorities. These sculptures are prototypes of depictions repeated and copied centuries over centuries. They are myths, symbols of healing, strength, beauty, olympian gods of movement and velocity. Over time they became fantasies and phantasms which are used to insist on historical continuity and normative standards. Establishing societies which look the same because they have been given the certainty that they are in direct lineage of something outstanding.

Therefore culture is uncanny. These aesthetics are reproduced without the consideration of geography, time, society, and individual. Buildings, pillars, towers, flanked with beautiful sculptures. Walls with beautiful

paintings. Here lies the fascination by these constructed fantasies.

Our work manifests itself consciously and purposely under the influence of these canons of culture. Our physical activity as two individuals generates issues which are psychological and physical. They bring up questions on age, on character, on being educated in a certain way, on social background, on geographical or communal origins. Both of us come from different cultural backgrounds and different continents. Being a couple, these aspects of our lives get combined naturally. Transnational existence and not feeling oneself belonging to one defined normative society makes visual tropes shift in their meaning and open to other symbols.



My Heart is a Poised Cithara.

Performance, October 28 and 31, 2020, *Palazzo Altemps*, Rome, duration 80 min.

Courtesy Ministero della cultura — Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Altemps.



korporre el, 2021.

Color pencil on canvas, 2 masks (color pencil on paper, elastic band), 215 × 492 cm (studio view).

Courtesy the artists and Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris.

L'esprit de notre temps.

Billboard in public space in Rome, exhibition *Villa Massimo in Città*, June 2021.





Now and the Past, 2021.

Color pencil on canvas, 215 × 547 cm, installation view, exhibition *While Being Other*, Mattatoio Rome, 2021.

Courtesy the artists and Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris.



While Being Other, 2021.
Performance, *Piramide Cestia*, Rome, duration 60 min.



171 stones, 2017–21 (and ongoing).
Stones from Kea, Vouliagmeni, Hinterstein, Tempelhofer Feld, Nara, Koyasan, Ostia, Santa Severa.
Courtesy the artists and Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris.



171 stones, 2017–21 (and ongoing).
Installation view, exhibition *While Being Other*, Mattatoio Rome, 2021.
Courtesy the artists and Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris.



L'esprit de notre temps (Piazza Girolamo Fabrizio), 2021.
Photograph



While Being Other, 2021.
Performance, exhibition *While Being Other*, Mattatoio, Rome, duration 60 min.

Prinz Gholam

is **Wolfgang Prinz** (*1969, Leutkirch, Germany) and **Michel Gholam** (*1963, Beirut, Lebanon). They have been working together since 2001.

As visual artists they have developed a multidisciplinary practice including live performances, videos, photographs, drawings, and objects. Their work is a continuous attempt to place and negotiate the ego and the body between their cultural construct and the world in which we live. Their performances are built on choreographic sequences, in which they process and deal with a range of images and behaviors coming from paintings, sculptures, film and media.



2001 the first analogous photographs were taken with a self-timer. The performance is outdoor, witnessed by the camera.

The images are body constellations, following a concept of giving away a historical visual construction to contemporary conditions, and allowing the immediate experience to rule the outcome of the work. The live performances come soon, and with them time lengthens and hence gains importance. Even in the static there is the potential of movement, and the decisive notion of time passing.

Recent exhibitions and performances took place at *Mattatoio Rome* (2021), *Palazzo Altemps Rome* (2020), *Hofkirche Innsbruck* (2019), *Pola Museum of Art in Hakone, Japan* (2019), *Punta della Dogana Venice* (2018), and *Kupferstich-Kabinett Dresden* (2018). They participated at *documenta 14* in Athens and Kassel in 2017. Furthermore they were part of exhibitions at *Národní Galerie Prague* (2016), at *Museion Bozen* (2014/15), and figured in the *Swiss Sculpture Exhibition Biel/Bienne* (2014). They had solo exhibitions at *Galerie Jocelyn Wolff* in Paris, *CAC Brétigny*, and at *Camera Austria* in Graz. From 2006 until 2010 they were part of the itinerant exhibition project *La Monnaie Vivant* with performances at *Studio Micadanses Paris*, *STUK Leuven*, *Tate Modern*, and *HAU1 Berlin*. In summer 2022 a major solo show opens at the *Musée d'art contemporain* in Rochechouart (France).

www.prinzgholam.com

L'esprit de notre temps (Villa Aldobrandini), 2021.
Photograph.

Next page: **My Heart is a Poised Cithara**.
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Rompreisträger | vincitori del Premio Roma 2020/21

Herausgeberin | edito da

Julia Draganović

Deutsche Akademie Rom Villa Massimo

Accademia Tedesca Roma Villa Massimo

Largo di Villa Massimo 1–2

00161 Rom | Roma

www.villamassimo.de

Redaktion | redazione

Julia Trolp

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Accademia Tedesca Roma Villa Massimo e gli autori

Bildnachweis | crediti fotografici

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Frontcover | copertina, S. | pp. 12 + 13:

Fotograf | fotografo: **Kobo Studio**, Courtesy die Künstler und |
gli artisti e Azienda Speciale Palaexpo/Mattatoio

S. | pp. 3, 4/5, 16:

Courtesy Ministero della cultura —

Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Altemps

Grafischer Entwurf und Lithografie | grafica e litografia

Carsten Wittig

Die Künstler danken | *gli artisti ringraziano:*

Sara Alberani, Valerio Del Baglivo, Angel Moya Garcia und den
Mitarbeiter*innen von | *e lo staff di Mattatoio* und | *e Villa Massimo*.
Ebenso danken sie | *la loro gratitudine va inoltre a* **Locales Project,**
Museo Nazionale Romano — Palazzo Altemps, Roma Culture,
Azienda Speciale PALAEXPO, Soprintendenza Speciale di Roma.

Druck | stampa

Pöge Druck, Leipzig

ISBN 979-12-809620-1-0



Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung
für Kultur und Medien



VILLA MASSIMO



DEUTSCHE AKADEMIE ROM
VILLA MASSIMO