

Rhôd 2013

Rebecca Ballestra: Future Nature Culture/Natur Dyfodol Diwylliant

Goat Major Projects, Cardiff

3 – 24 November/Tachwedd 2013

Opening/Agoriad: 3 November/Tachwedd 2013 2pm

This exhibition presents new works by Italian artist **Rebecca Ballestra**, created during her residency at **Rhôd** earlier this year. **Rhôd** is an annual exhibition of site-specific contemporary art and performance, at an old mill in rural West Wales. Its fifth exhibition, curated by Cardiff based artist, **Sara Rees**, invited artists to creatively respond to the phrase *Future Nature Culture*; to consider both the local and the wider global context of our relationship to nature now and into the future. **Rebecca Ballestra** further explores these themes in her exhibition at **Goat Major Projects** in Cardiff.

Such issues are of major ongoing concern to the artist's practice. For the past two years Ballestra has been working on *Journey into Fragility*, an art project inspired by the *The Arenzano Manifesto for Earth and Human Beings*, written by **Massimo Morasso** in 2001. Morasso's Manifesto, consisting of twelve statements, attempts to constructively reframe various issues arising from the global environmental crisis, and has been subscribed to by world famous poets, including Nobel and Pulitzer prize winners.

In *Journey into Fragility*, Ballestra takes each of the 12 statements for the manifesto and creates projects and artworks in response to them. Each 'step' of the journey has taken the artist to a different part of the world, with the aim of creating an open, inclusive and constructive dialogue about the environment and the value of life on Earth. Her residency in Wales comprises Step 8 and corresponds to the eighth statement of the Manifesto for the Earth and the Human Being: *Preserving everyone's defining features, if to respect differences and promote dialogue leads to an effective pluralism, much more than the universalistic utopia and the rough generalization on which modernity had its foundations set.*

Rebecca Ballestra will be in conversation at the opening of the exhibition at Goat Major Projects on 3 November at 3.30pm.

Rhôd 2013 Symposium: Future Nature Culture – 17 November, 2pm at Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff.

A free symposium in which artists and ecologists reflect on Rhôd 2013 exhibition and its themes. All welcome.

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For immediate release
24 October/Hydref 2013

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Links:

Rhôd: <http://therhod.wordpress.com>

Rebecca Ballestra: <http://www.rebeccaballestra.com>

Goat Major Projects: <http://www.goatmajorprojects.com/>

Journey into Fragility: <http://www.journeyintofragility.com/>

Further information about the exhibition:

Rebecca Ballestra uses the words and concepts of the **Rhôd** 2013 theme to create a series of artworks.

The word 'Future' is explored in relation to our use of natural resources - the current and emerging practices of sustainable agriculture, energy and eco-living, which are underpinned by the philosophy and vision of a future in which the re-imagining of our relationship with the natural world is paramount, moving us towards new models of care, respect and reciprocity.

The word 'Nature' is interpreted as the primary elements for the survival of the human being, and is represented by moss, one of the most ancient and primitive form of plants. Ballestra positions 'Culture' as cultural biodiversity, collective heritage, memory and identity, as existing in ecosystems, rooted in place: and as being equally fragile and threatened by globalisation and capitalism as 'nature' is, and thus equally in need of preservation and respect.

One of the works included in the exhibition is realized in collaboration with **Microcollection** (www.microcollection.it) which is a part of *The Journey to Fragility* project.

About Rhôd and The Rhôd Artists Group:

Rhôd is a unique open-air contemporary art event held annually in Melin Glonc, Drefelin, Drefach Felindre, Carmarthenshire SA44 5XB. Since 2009 the owners, Roger Lougher and Mari Beynon Owen have arranged for artists to show their installation art in and around the

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old corn mill. This water mill, which along with all the machinery and equipment is grade two listed, has played an important role in the industrial and social history of Drefelin village. It stands on the banks of the river Bargod within eleven acres of land consisting of woodland, wild gardens and meadows.

Rhôd's aims are :

- Specialise in installation art
- Encourage new work in performance and time-based media art
- Encourage artists to respond directly to the site – the location, history and the community
- Give artists the opportunity to develop work over a period of time before and after the show
- Provide an opportunity for an artist in residence

The organizing committee, Rhôd Artists Group is formed from artists who have shown at the exhibition or have specific skills within the visual arts sector. As well as staging the annual show, it also serves to continue the dialogue between artists, to develop further opportunities to show work and to promote installation art in Wales and beyond.