

## THE HUMAN FACTOR – MUSEO PIETRO CANONICA IN VILLA BORGHESE – ROME

June 4th, 2012

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Edited by Naima Morelli, Guest Editor in Rome  
<http://vernissageatmidnight.wordpress.com/>

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Since Art Residences were established, artists took advantage and started travelling around the world. It was such a great possibility. Who can refuse accommodation and a guarantee daily meal in faraway countries, ending with a personal exhibition?

In residence time artists gave birth to projects which are often result of an hybridising process. Weird installations and psychedelic videos issued out to the artists previous work and the host country influences. Sometimes is just the exhibition place that is unusual for a kind of art, and that is exactly 'The Human Factor' exhibition case.

So, you have to imagine a typical late '800 starting '900 Italian noble mansion, just in the middle of Villa Borghese Gardens, Rome. There's were the sculptor an composer Piero Canonica lived, but now it's a museum filled with statues, paintings and beautiful relics. Basically the interiors and the furniture remained the same, but sometimes curators tries to renew the environment, making contemporary art exhibitions.

Could sound like a weird experiment to Liang Shuo (China), Charles Lim (Singapore), Koki Tanaka (Japan) and Wan Hong-Kai (Taiwan), the attendees to the Qwartz Rome Residency Program. The idea was matching oriental contemporary art with an old typical roman ambience.



Liang Shuo 's Temporary Sculptures were Dadaistic assemblages of domestic and colourful objects. They were put at the place of Canonica's classical sculptures giving a surrealistic impression to the viewers. It was a very funny reflection of the estrangement of daily objects, very far to the anguishing Mona Hatoum work on the same subject.

Charles Lim's ghosts embodied in a video "One Day I forgot and used my hand", projected on the wall through the sundries. It was more colour suggestion and flashes of images, than a story. You can hardly see what seems to be palms, then a man by the sea, maybe a street, but it's all wonderfully blurred. The tapping as background sound suggest that the shots could be out from a short circuit or a dreamer mind.

An other video "It's not that I forgot but rather I chose not to mention", showed a misty pool with just a man swimming slowly in it. Such alienating.



The last one of his work was the most interesting. The Piero Canonica's bedroom was filled with photos of navy station radio transmitters instead of Canonica's book, giving a very surrealistic mood. At the same time a radio catch the real radio signals from the stations all over the world, starting from the artist's native Singapore.

Koki Tanaka focused more on a behavioural art. She let five trolleys in the streets of Rome, putting on a message to bring back the trolley to Canonica Museum. The five points were marked on a map, and between the pictures in the museum there were photos showing the action. Just one trolley went back, and was exposed the vernissage day.



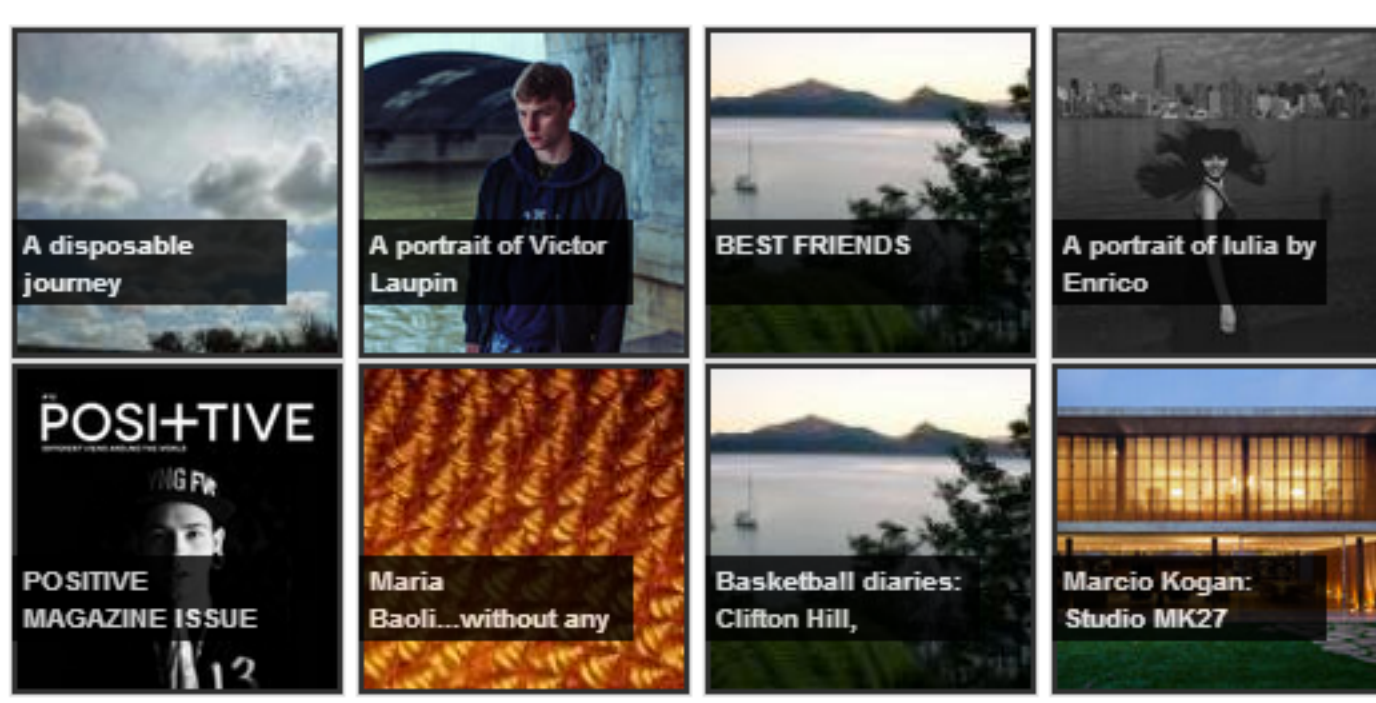
The performance of Wang Hong-Kai consisted in the reading of a phone interview transcription between the artist and the Australian composer Chris Mann. In the Piero Canonica living room, there were Italian actors improvising on the text read out loud by two English speakers.

So we can say the artists and their artwork not just survived the hard proof of an unorthodox showcase, but they succeeded to empowering their work this way.

That is, at least, the residencies programmes aim.

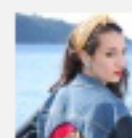


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