

Museum of Contemporary Art, Santa Barbara

# Ephemeral Installations by Lara Favaretto

By Ariana Meyers / VOICE

**C**APTIVATING CONTEMPORARY INSTALLATIONS are popping up at multiple venues across Santa Barbara as part of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Santa Barbara's (MCASB) new exhibition of works by Turin, Italy-based artist Lara Favaretto. Marking Favaretto's solo U.S. West Coast debut, and the inaugural curatorial project for MCASB's newly appointed Executive Director and Chief Curator Abaseh Mirvali, the exhibition will be on view through April 28th.

"I wanted to begin my tenure at MCASB with an artist who reflected my philosophy as a curator while also beginning a new collaborative mission at the Museum," explained Mirvali. "While the aesthetics of Lara Favaretto's work

are based in art history, its content is about our shared human condition. Her work is ephemeral, often transforming over time, and this sense of vulnerability is what connects us with it."

Presented in four venues, the exhibition aims to bring a new kind of art to the Santa Barbara community.

"Each work, viewed individually conveys a certain meaning and its impact on the viewer is one, but when they are read together, Lara's works unlock a greater panorama," shared Mirvali.

The biggest installation, *Coppie Semplici (Simple Couples)*, is a row of large and colorful moving car wash brushes installed along the walls of MCASB's main gallery. Spinning aimlessly as they deteriorate over time, the brushes represent the passage of time.

"*Coppie Semplici (Simple Couples)* reflects much of how I felt moving to Santa Barbara after spending the last 17 years abroad," commented Mirvali. "When a car goes through a car wash, there is a lot of movement, and when the car emerges on the other side, it comes out clean. It is a transition."

Returning to MCASB's main space after having been on view at UCSB's Glassbox Gallery, *Fisting and Boring* are part of a series in which Favaretto uses her body to imprint an action in a

block of recently-poured concrete.

"Both pieces, the brushes as well as the concrete works, are beautiful sculptural objects, yet they become jarring with the passage of time," related Mirvali. "They also capture many of the dichotomies at play across Lara Favaretto's overall oeuvre: movement/stasis, vulnerability/resiliency, shaping/deforming, creation/destruction."

Extending the Museum's reach beyond the main gallery walls, Mirvali and Favaretto transformed an empty storefront at 907 State Street into the installation *Tutti Giù Per Terra*. Large fans blow tons of colorful confetti around the empty storefront, creating a fun surprise for passersby.

"It was important to me that we include a space on State Street within the exhibition because it highlights one of the major issues that Santa Barbara is currently facing with downtown revitalization," shared Mirvali. "We are thrilled to be able to see the response that we've received so far with passersby engaging with art visible in the community."

The final venue, the Museum's future location at 35 Anacapa Street, will host *Defense*



Abaseh Mirvali, Executive Director & Chief Curator of Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (right) joins Wendy Chang, Director of the Rennie Museum, Vancouver, Canada (left) in conversation at MCASB for the opening of Lara Favaretto.

Photo by Alex Blair



Photo by Kim Nilsson

*Disassembling* by Lara Favaretto

Installation view at Manifesta 10, Winter Palace, State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia, 2014, Courtesy the Artist and Galleria Franco Noero.

*d'Entrer (Do Not Enter)*, a plaque forbidding visitors to pass over, beginning Saturday, February 23rd.

Lara Favaretto gave Mirvali the opportunity to collaborate not only in Santa Barbara, but internationally.

"In choosing to work with artist Lara Favaretto, I also had the pleasure of working with Rennie Museum, based in Vancouver, Canada," commented Mirvali. "We share a similar artistic philosophy as well as a sense of social responsibility, which is what led to our partnership for the exhibition."

www.mcasantabarbara.org



Photo by Carly Olness

*Coppie Semplici (Simple Couples)* by Lara Favaretto.

