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## **Filippo Berta / Calixto Ramírez** **UNA SOLA MOLTITUDINE**

curated by **Saverio Verini**

Opening: **Wednesday 9th November 2016 | 6.30pm**  
10th November 2016 – 10th March 2017

**smART - polo per l'arte**  
Piazza Crati 6/7, Rome

Rome, October 2016 – **smART - polo per l'arte** presents **Una sola moltitudine (A single multitude)**, a double-solo exhibition by the artists **Filippo Berta** (1977) and **Calixto Ramirez** (1980), curated by **Saverio Verini**.

Following on from the success of **STOP AND GO. The art of the animated GIF**, dedicated to one of the languages of recent digital culture, smART has moved its attention to the genre of performance art. Both active in Italy, but frequently participating in international exhibitions, Berta and Ramírez are united by a **rigorous, conscious and recognizable artistic development**, closely linked to the use of the body and its relationship with the landscape, the spaces of the city, and other more intimate contexts. The idea for the exhibition is based on the similarities between the two artists: their choice of the performance as a favourite medium, their use of the human body, the physical and psychological tension that dominates their actions, and their translation of performances into “concrete” pictures – by means of photographs and videos – that have an **iconic and visually meaningful character**. But *Una sola moltitudine* – a title that refers to an eponymous collection of poems by the Portuguese writer and poet Fernando Pessoa – also intends to present two diametrically opposite approaches towards the idea of the performance: on the one hand the collective dimension and the research into human relations of Philip Berta, and the other the very pronounced individuality of Calixto Ramírez.

The performances of Filippo Berta, which always involve groups of “ordinary” people, force us to face the relentless banality of our actions and, at the same time, their inestimable power. These gestures are able to imprint themselves on the eyes of the beholder, and they become **shared rituals** that come to populate a collective imagination consisting of humanity and disillusionment, encounters and conflicts. Filippo Berta emphasizes the banal action and he repeats it and amplifies it, turning it almost into an act of **heroism and resistance**, and highlighting the extra-ordinary aspects of our everyday lives.

Calixto Ramírez, on the other hand, uses his body almost exclusively as a **measure of surrounding reality**, as a sculptural element that takes on a shape and a position in its relation to its physical context. His work is characterized by a radical **economy of means** and for the artist his own physical presence is sufficient to give life to disturbing and unpredictable performances with a strong visual impact. Ramírez seems to be forever risking his safety in totally useless deeds and actions; and it is precisely this “friction” between danger and futility that gives his performance their grotesque and ironic character, mocking and playing with the limitations and inadequacies of our actions.

In the show, in addition to a selection of works realized over the last few years, there will be some **new productions** conceived on the basis of certain specific aspects connected with smART, such as the characteristics of the exhibition space, the presence of children who take part in the association's educational activities, and the characteristics of the local neighbourhood. The works of Berta and

Ramírez "will face each other" in the exhibition space, **creating a dialogue between two different approaches to the idea of the performance.**

*Una sola moltitudine* will be accompanied by a publication with essays by **Margherita Marzotto** and **Stephanie Fazio** – respectively the President of smART and the Director of the exhibition space – as well as by the curator of the exhibition **Saverio Verini** and the essayist and journalist **Daniele Balicco**.

The program also includes a series of educational activities and meetings connected with the themes and the genres of the exhibition, which have been planned for the first part of 2017.

### **Biographies of the artists**

**Filippo Berta** was born in Treviglio (in the province of Bergamo – *Italy*) in 1977 and he now lives and works in Milan and Bergamo. For many years Berta has organized artistic actions involving the active participation of groups of people. This collective dimension of his performances creates situations and tensions that create images and scenarios with a strong visual impact. The artist has exhibited his work in prominent institutions such as the Museum of Contemporary Art of Zagreb (2016), the *Städtischen Galerie* of Bremen (2013), the *Madre* Museum of Contemporary Art of Naples (2012) and the State Museum of Contemporary Art of Thessaloniki (2012). He also took part in the the 4th Thessaloniki *Biennale* (2013), the 3rd Moscow Biennale (2012) and the 5th Prague Contemporary Art Biennale (2011). In 2014 Berta won the Maretti Prize in *Havana*, Cuba and in the same year he was a finalist for the Talent Prize in Rome. In 2008 he was one of the winners of the 4th Edition of the International Prize for Performance organized by the *Galleria Civica* of Trento.

**Calixto Ramírez** was born in 1980 in Reynosa (in the state of Tamaulipas - Mexico). He graduated from the "*La Esmeralda*" Art School in Mexico City in 2008 and since 2013 he has lived and worked in Rome. All of his works are characterized by an extreme economy of means, which nevertheless allows the artist to conceive of performances and *interventions* that have a strong visual impact. His works – consisting of installations, video art, performances and photography – have been exhibited in numerous galleries and exhibition centres in Europe and Latin America: these include the *Museo del Novecento* (Naples, 2016); the *Fondazione Memmo* (Rome, 2015); the *Museo de Arte Carillo Gil* and the *Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes* (Mexico City, 2013-2014); the Young Artist Biennial (Monterrey, 2012) and the Marcelino Botin Foundation (Santander, 2009).

**smART - polo per l'arte** | Piazza Crati 6/7 - 00199 Roma  
Stephanie Fazio – Director of the exhibition space Opening hours:  
Tuesday to Friday 11am-1pm / 3pm-6pm – on Saturday by  
appointment  
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