

Press release

TROPICAL MILAN

An exploration about our present, and a possible future

by Erez Nevi Pana

curated by Maria Cristina Didero

5 Vie Head Quarter

Via Cesare Correnti 14, Milan

From September 28 until October 10, 2020

Produced by 5 Vie

Tropical Milan is a new project by Erez Nevi Pana for 5 Vie district. Following the exhibition ***Vegan Design – Or the Art of Reduction*** (2018) at Garage San Remo – the Israeli designer presents a new installation comprising a film that addresses the themes of veganism, self-sustainability, and global warming, and once again corners human beings to their responsibilities.

In 2018, after his return to his homeland, Nevi Pana reflected upon the exhibition presented in Milan which was realized with vegan materials he had found and collected over time. **He confronted the limits of this practice** for his future projects, and challenged the idea of using, not only vegan supplies, but also **going one step further, growing his own ingredients** so that he could gain total control over them.

***Tropical Milan* is a visionary immersion in a jungle-like environment** - which could stand as a symbol for the center of the city of Milan - in which **human beings are forced to confront**, among other symptoms, extreme humidity, a mosquito invasion, and the dramatic results of wrong monoculture (single crop production) which results in limited food supply, poverty and global mass migrations. As we see in Nevi Pana's movie, humanity is forced to slow down, stay still, breathe differently, and protect themselves by turning into cocoons - also made here with fully sustainable home grown fibres. The man in the film who serves as an **icon** (you cannot even see his face as he represents all of us) is surrounded by banana plants (the same ones we found in the venue) that recall the idea of multitude. **He sleeps, tragically referring to the state we are living in today.** Instead of waking up and doing something for all of us, for himself, for our planet, he is acting blindly and way too slowly; he awaits for something to happen, and that is how we will end up sooner than we think in such an inhospitable environment.

In reaction to this futuristic vision, Erez Nevi Pana imagines a series of pieces made of banana stems and leaves, *luffa* or bamboo, that he has grown himself

not **only to be 100% sustainable but also fully responsible**, projecting a new frontier of what it would mean to realize total creations in the XXI Century.

The film is slow and it seems that nothing is happening. Instead, a lot is happening there. We only perceive the result as we deal with an **Oblomov-like** character. As in this Russian classic we see a man totally absorbed in his deep apathy, nothing can arouse him, even if he is a man of noble and virtuous instincts. His lack of will-power is his cage; a cage he has built himself.

The **film soundtrack** is also very meaningful. Nevi Pana chose a contemporary trance music to counterpart the images in the film, as a declaration of imminence and urgency. As a reversal of the sights in the video, the sound simulates the cognitive trance in which the person lives and presents detachment from reality.

Through ***Tropical Milan*** the city becomes the symbol of global decadence, in contrast with its charming, glamorous, and hyperactive image, and for its cynical and grief way of living that the designer totally refuses. This apocalyptic scenario also exposes the viewer to an unspectacular reality, in which time appears to slow down, society is highly compromised or totally cancelled; slowness, loneliness, and silence overshadow any of human beings' possible activities. We don't want to reach this point. We know it is late, but much can still be done, otherwise the banana trees planted a few years ago in Piazza Duomo won't be just a decoration any longer. Climate change is real and is happening because of our behaviors; and yes, "**the house is on fire**" - Greta Thunberg.

Film

Directed by Erez Nevi Pana

Author Erez nevi Pana

Filming and Editing Ofer Kantor

Objects

Tropical Milan collection is composed by 3 objects:

Vegana Banana Bag Chair made of banana fibre recycled bottles and Styrofoam

Tropical Banana Rocking Chair made of banana fibre and recycled net

Steamy Banana Hammock made of banana fibre and luffa

