

Talent Hunters

A.B. (May 06, 2011)



Three young Italians, with a nose for creativity and ingenuity, believe that the arts should be contagious

Whether art lovers or savvy marketers, their aim is to discover and support young talent by organizing shows, social events and performances in order to infect, like a virus, as many people as possible. New York is their laboratory. Alessandro Spreafico, Elena Avesani and Gianfrancesco Mottola are the three young Italian professionals behind [Contaminate NYC](#) [2], the boutique agency conceived by Alessandro and Elena. Born in Como, with a background in film directing and editing, 28-year-old Alessandro is the Director of Contaminate NYC. Elena, 39, a software developer and a product manager by trade and insatiable art lover at heart, is the Executive Director. Back in 2008, they wanted to create a place in which to empower and support artists outside of the conventional art world channels.

In their portfolio, today, there are more than 90 artists, who can benefit from the experience of



Gianfrancesco Mottola, 32, the new director of Marketing and Communication. Born in Rome, he has a knack for choosing venues, that without taking attention away from the art works, are spellbinding. The Cloud Lounge at Beatrice can certainly fall within that category. From the spectacular 54th floor penthouse of the new luxury building on 29th street and 6th Ave, he explained to us that Contaminate NYC operates as a boutique agency, offering intimate connections with its talent pool. "In New York there are many artists but there are just a few labels organizing events related to the arts and in most of the cases they focus on one segment (i.e. painting, photography, etc.), while we have made it our goal to organize multi-segment events," he stressed while offering us a delicious Absolute Kurant cocktail.

Coherently with this mission, the work showcased at the Cloud Lounge was remarkably heterogeneous: from the performance of Japanese belly dancer Lale Sayoko, to the film of video artist Brian Gonzalez, as well as the work of painters Cait O'Connor and Samuela Malizia.

The beauty and power of the female body is glorified by [Lale Sayoko](#) [3]'s unique, stylish, and exciting interpretation of the art of belly dancing and by [Samuela Malizia](#) [4]'s Beautiful Cliché series. Samuela's graphical and stark drawings of women depicted in a moment of solitary re- lax and privacy, convey a secret and intimate pleasure, delicately yet not overtly erotic. Stillness and simplicity are intentionally employed to emphasize a female body's essential grace, aiming at showing her solitary beauty in the purest form. Poetic characters, delicate, tidy textures, and fascinating atmosphere are the trademark of [Cait O'Connor](#) [5]'s paintings and illustrations. Women, mysterious and almost ghostly entities escaping earthly judgment, are the subject of a dream-like world that hits the viewer with melancholy and a yearning for an unattainable harmony. Playing with a cold palette to render transparencies, veils and graceful draperies, Cait creates a fairy-tale stage for these aloof and detached girls, lost in their imaginary worlds. [Brian Gonzales](#) [6] has created an elegant and seductive film, It Can't be true, which was commissioned by [XXXX Magazine](#) [7] for [Art Basel-Miami Beach](#) [8]201. It is at first a gate into the dramatic and emotional dream of a blind and seemingly lonely girl. Yet, Brian's powerful symbolism becomes apparent when new intriguing details emerge at every observation.

Since the three Italians are always in search of imaginative and valuable individuals, they are launching an international theme-based contest for emerging artists called - ONE HUNDRED DAYS. The competition is open to visual and installation art. Artists worldwide will be called to submit their artwork through the CNYC website. A prestigious jury will select the best and most pertinent work for each theme. The winning artists will have the opportunity to showcase their work in three hip and high-end locations in NY for a total of 100 days (33 days each).

Good Luck to all the creative ones out there!

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[3] <http://www.lalesayoko.com/>

[4] <http://samuelamalizia.com/>

[5] <http://cait-oconnor.com/home.html>

[6] <http://vimeo.com/user2321669>

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