

GLADSTONE GALLERY

ARTFORUM

Paloma Varga Weisz

CASTELLO DI RIVOLI MUSEO D'ARTE CONTEMPORANEA
Piazza Mafalda di Savoia
October 27–January 10

What if memory were not a trustworthy and responsible means for gauging a life? And what if the simple reason for this was that memory does not give priority to the truth? Is memory actually more pragmatic, devious, and cunning? Not in a hostile or malicious manner—on the contrary, it might act to satisfy our needs. This exhibition by the German artist Paloma Varga Weisz poses such substantial questions. It is a show of anthropomorphic sculptures endowed with mysterious protuberances, which appear as ideal extrusions of our sensory systems. The sculptures seem to be the result of a syncretic action between the kinds of sculpture that one still sees in European alpine regions and early examples of three-dimensional art, particularly the Venus of Willendorf. Many of the gouaches also on view here establish a discourse with the sculptures, while the film *Deux Artists*, 1986, by Varga Weisz, Bernd Stoll, and Feri Varga, documents a surreal dialogue between two protagonists: the artist and her father.



View of "Paloma Varga Weisz," 2015–16.

There is something about this show that pushes memory into the void of oblivion, distorting it into something unrecognizable. The installation gallantly misinterprets it, but then clearly restores it. Memory an idea also supported by the exhibition's title, "Root of a Dream," which is taken from a poem by Paul Celan and here refers to Varga Weisz's investigation into the relationship between recollection and the return of the repressed.

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

— Marco Tagliaferro

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