

Filippo Minelli: Chemotherapy Update _ Link Point, Brescia



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On December 25, 2010, **Filippo Minelli** was diagnosed with a 4.2-degree (on a scale to 5) Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma, a blood cancer that in his case also attacked liver, spleen, marrow and a lung. He was recovered in the Hematology Division of the City Hospital in Brescia from the end of December 2010 to mid August, 2011. Contrary to what was expected, he survived.

At the moment of recovery, doctors were very skeptical about his survival. At the hospital, for months he could not receive people because chemotherapy weakened his immune defense system. So, in order to express himself and keep friends and relatives updated about his emotional and physical state, he launched a blog updated daily from the phone by publishing images customized using Phoster, an iPhone app conceived to easily design flyers. Day after day, **Chemotherapy Update** (this was the name of the blog) offered to its followers an account, brutal and ironic at the same time, of the small things of his daily life, turned into events by the prospect of a possible unhappy end: jabs, drugs, good and bad news, hopes and disappointments, hair loss and the need to shave again, the meetings with other patients, the priest coming to comfort him. Everything is commented by short sarcastic sentences that violently bring life back to the dullness of the hospital: the chemo treatment recalls Martini or Vodka; a roost for intravenous feeding makes him think about a Christmas tree; the pills he has to take remind him of Neo and Matrix; the CAT machine becomes a giant vagina. In all these images, the extroverted language of flyers – commonly used for commercial announcements – is forced onto a personal, intimate narrative, that Minelli doesn't want to keep for himself, but to express with his direct, incisive language.

At **Link Point**, this story of the past will be presented on the walls of the exhibition space, while the center of the room will host an installation presenting the “souvenirs” of the treatment – chemo bags, documents, syringes – together with the soil taken from the lands where Minelli was used to play when he was a child, and where he started making graffiti and experimenting with the smoke bombs he still use in his eclectic artistic practice. For years, those lands were used as a landfill for dumping – without any safety control – the industrial muds contaminated by Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), a now banned persistent organic pollutant, from a local factory. A number of peer-reviewed health studies have shown an association between exposure to PCBs and non-Hodgkin Lymphoma.

Filippo Minelli (1983) makes art in public spaces since the end of the Nineties. Since 2005 he presented his work in many group and solo exhibitions, including: *Silence/Shapes*, Fundación Loewe, Madrid 2014 (solo); *Utopian Days*, Total Museum for Contemporary Arts, Seoul 2014; *Rise of Populism in Europe*, LX Factory, Lisbona 2012; *ITLIA DI MRD, learn to hate and then to write*, ROJO Artspace, Milan 2011 (solo); 54° Biennale di Venezia, Padiglione Italia, Milan 2011; *ACT/OUT*, Onomatopoe Foundation, Eindhoven 2011; *FOTOGRAFIA*, Festival Internazionale di Fotografia, MACRO, Rome 2010. His works have been published in magazines and books, including *The Art Of Rebellion* (Gestalten, 2003 - 2004). The upcoming monography *FILIPPO MINELLI: Playing Activism Somehow*, will be published soon by Onomatopoe, the Netherlands (2014).



Saturday, March 15, 2014
6.30 - 9.30 PM
Link Point, Brescia, Italy
Via Alessandro Monti 13