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## In search of la bella vita, Mendes Wood sets up in bucolic Italian villa

Gallery opens an exhibition of works by Cristina Canale, Vojtěch Kovařík, Paulo Nazareth and Brice Guilbert at Villa Era as clients seek a more rural art experience during pandemic

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Works by Cristina Canale, Vojtěch Kovařík and Brice Guilbert are displayed around Villa Era in northern Italy

It is well documented that New York galleries and auction houses such as Pace and Sotheby's have flocked to [open galleries in the Hamptons](#) and, now, Palm Beach, following their wealthy clientele as they flee crowded Manhattan for second homes during the coronavirus pandemic.

Now, the São Paulo, New York and Brussels-based gallery [Mendes Wood DM](#) has opened the Italian equivalent—an exhibition of three artists at the idyllic Villa Era, high in the hills between Milan and Turin. Works by the Brazilian Berlin-based artist Cristina Canale, the

Czech painter Vojtěch Kovařík, the Brussels-based artist Brice Guilbert and an installation by the Brazilian artist Paulo Nazareth will be displayed across the ground and first floors of the 19th-century villa until 15 November and the show is open by appointment.

Since the pandemic hit, the gallery has been looking to show art in unusual places, outside big city centres. The aim of this show, a statement says, is to "slow down the traditional pace at which we experience art and present it in a bucolic context."



Cristina Canale's Paisagem (2020) © Renato Ghiazza. Courtesy of the artist

"We made this decision at Mendes Wood because we all feel that future art experiences are going to be very different even after this pandemic is put to bed, and this ties in closely to the future use of cities and dense urban centres," says Ermanno Rivetti, an associate director at Mendes Wood. "Everyone was dreaming of getting out to the countryside during lockdown, and I think that feeling will linger for many of us. With all this in mind, we are looking to

bring art to the countryside." He adds: "While international travel was temporarily banned, many of us rediscovered the beauty of staying local, and consequently the beauty of projects and experiences that are locally rooted."

The exhibition opened last weekend and so far, visitors have "come from all over Italy, the local countryside, Milan and Turin, but also as far as Paris, Zurich and Geneva," Rivetti says.

The gallery has been actively launching out-of-town projects elsewhere too. On 19 September, it opened a collaborative show with Blum Poe and the art and design fair Object & Thing at the Noyes House, featuring works of contemporary art and design displayed around the modernist residence in Connecticut (until 28 November). Two of the gallery's artists, Sonia Gomes and Marina Simao, currently have a show at Pace in the Hamptons (closing this Sunday 4 October).

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