

Gianfranco Zappettini: *The Golden Age*

Curated by Martin Holman

7 February - 11 April 2020

Private View: Thursday 6 February 6pm - 8pm

Mazzoleni London presents *The Golden Age*, a solo exhibition of paintings by Gianfranco Zappettini and curated by Martin Holman. The exhibition will open to the public on Friday 7 February and continue until Saturday 11 April 2020, followed by a second show from 23 April to 4 July 2020 at the Mazzoleni gallery in Turin.

Gianfranco Zappettini, co-founder of the international Analytical Painting movement in the 1970s (which spanned Italy, Germany, France, and the Netherlands), is considered one of the most relevant living abstract Italian painters. The term 'Analytical Painting' (Analytische Malerei), was coined by art historian and critic Klaus Honnef in 1974. Zappettini's works have been exhibited in public museums across Europe (Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster, 1971; Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Turin, 1977; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1978; Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome, 1981) and at "documenta 6" in Kassel in 1977.

The London exhibition will focus on a completely new series of paintings, which investigates the symbolic meaning of gold as a metaphysical sense of spiritual perfection, not just as a precious material. Moreover, Zappettini's extensive personal research on Taosim, Zen and Sufism is intrinsic to this body of work. The colour gold is the theme of the installation and as Zappettini states, "*While the time of myth is cyclical, there is also correspondence between past and future, between end and beginning, because what has been will necessarily repeat again. A new 'Golden Age' will follow the age in which we are living - a final epoch, degenerate and stripped of spirituality: this narrates the myth and this may prefigure art, capable of conserving the most profound values and, like myth, of passing the confines of time.*"

The artist's method is based on calm attentiveness; each and every area of the painting, meticulously separated from one another, can be distinguished through the density of colour and expressed through the respective stratification of the painterly material. For Zappettini painting is a spiritual exercise; the colours utilised in his work - the gold, silver and bronze of his *Warp and Weft*, (*La Trama e l'Ordito*) series - allude to meanings of a metaphysical order which communicate the ancient splendours of a time when art still had a propensity towards the divine, recalling Fra Angelico, Simone Martini and Ambrogio Lorenzetti.

The Turin exhibition will also display other paintings from series dating back to the 1990s and 2000s.

The illustrated catalogue will be published by Skira, and includes essays by Dr. Martin Holman, British curator and art critic; Prof. Klaus Honnef, German museum director and art historian and critic; Prof. Paola Valenti, professor of contemporary art history at the University of Genoa.

Gianfranco Zappettini was born in Genoa in 1939.

In 1962 Zappettini held his first personal exhibition in Palazzetto Rosso in his hometown and began working in the offices of architect Konrad Wachsmann and, together with German painter Winfred Gaul, he began to experience the artistic environment in Germany and Holland. In 1971 he was invited to the *Arte Concreta* ("Concrete Art") exhibition at the Westfälischer Kunstverein in Münster, curated by Klaus Honnef. In those years, he participated in the main exhibitions of Analytical Painting: *Tempi di percezione* ("Times of perception", Livorno, 1973), *Un futuro possibile - nuova pittura* ("A Possible Future – New Painting", Ferrara, 1973), *Geplante Malerei* (Münster and Milan, 1974), *Analytische Malerei* (Düsseldorf, 1975), *Concerning Painting...* (a travelling exhibition in various Dutch museums, 1975-1976). In 1977 he was invited to "documenta 6" in Kassel and in 1978 he attended the collective exhibition *Abstraction Analytique* at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. In the last fifteen years, his work has focused on the symbolism of weft and warp. In 2007, the VAF Foundation (Frankfurt, Germany) dedicated an impressive monographic show to his work.

The artist's personal exhibitions during the last fifty years include the following international institutions: Westfälischer Kunstverein (Münster, 1975), Internationaal Cultureel Centrum (Antwerp, 1978), Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Villa Croce (Genoa, 1997), CAMeC - Centro d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea (La Spezia, 2007), Forum Kunst (Rottweil, 2007, with Paolo Icaro), LuCCA - Lucca Center of Contemporary Arts (Lucca, 2012), Janus Pannonius - Vasarely Museum (Pécs, 2015). The latest collective exhibitions in public spaces encompass: *Pittura analitica. I percorsi italiani. 1970-1980* ("Analytical Painting. The Italian Paths. 1970-1980", at Museo della Permanente, Milan, 2007), *Pittura aniconica*, ("Aniconic Painting," at Casa del Mantegna, Mantua 2008), *Pensare pittura* ("Thinking Painting", at Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Villa Croce, Genoa, 2009), *Analytische Malerei* ("Analytic Painting," at Forum Kunst, Rottweil, 2011), *Gli anni della pittura analitica* ("The Years of Analytical Painting," at Palazzo della Gran Guardia, Verona, 2016).

Gianfranco Zappettini first exhibited at Mazzoleni with a solo show in 2016 in the Turin gallery, followed by his participation in collective shows such as *Pittura Analitica. Anni '70* ("Analytical Painting. 1970s", London, 2016), *Mazzoleni 1986-2016. 30 Years of Art, 30 Italian Artists* (Turin, 2016 and London, 2017), *Pittura Analitica. Then and Now* (Turin, 2017), and *Light in Motion – Balla, Dorazio, Zappettini* (London, 2017).

He lives and works in Chiavari, Genoa, where he founded the Zappettini Foundation for Contemporary Art in 2003.

Mazzoleni

Mazzoleni was founded in Turin in 1986 by Giovanni and Anna Pia Mazzoleni, as a natural evolution of their private collection started in the 1950s. The historic Turin space, which occupies three floors of Palazzo Panizza, overlooking the city-centre Piazza Solferino, has since 2014 been flanked by the London gallery in Mayfair. Over the past three decades Mazzoleni has organised solo and group exhibitions of more than 200 prominent Italian and international artists from across the 20th century with an exhibition programme focused on museum-calibre Italian art from the post-war period and recently the contemporary panorama, working in close collaboration with artists' estates and foundations.

All exhibitions are accompanied by fully illustrated monographs, with authoritative critical texts. Under the leadership of Davide and Luigi Mazzoleni, in recent years Mazzoleni has intensified its international activities, participating in numerous art fairs, including Art Basel (Basel, Miami and Hong Kong), Frieze Masters (London), TEFAF (Maastricht and New York) and FIAC (Paris).

NOTES TO EDITORS

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Address: Mazzoleni, 27 Albemarle Street, London W1S 4HZ

Gallery Hours: Mon – Fri 10am – 6pm, Sat 11am – 5pm.

Admission: Free | Website: www.mazzoleniart.com | Tel: +44 207 495 8805

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