

Press Release

Italians
Art Basel Hong Kong 2021

21 – 23 May 2021
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre
Booth 1D28 | Online Viewing Room

Under the direction of Dr Stefano Fossati, the Italian Cultural Institute in Hong Kong, is delighted to organise and present ***ITALIANS***, a **collective booth of 8 leading Italian galleries**, at **Art Basel Hong Kong 2021**, running from May 21 to May 23, 2021, with preview days on May 19 and May 20.

The initiative results in a finely designed group show titled ***ITALIANS*** and curated by the Italian art historian and curator Fabio Cavallucci. The show will feature high quality works from all the participating galleries. This project is part of ***Italian Style***, a year-long initiative to celebrate the wide range of Italian artistic production.

Mazzoleni is pleased to exhibit a selection of works by **Agostino Bonalumi** and **Getulio Alviani**. Also on view through an **Online Viewing Room**, the gallery presentation includes works by **Giorgio de Chirico**, **Giorgio Morandi** and **Salvo**.

In the late 1960s, **Agostino Bonalumi's** 'Object-Paintings' transcend the bounds of the wall and, in some cases, became free-standing sculptures in their own rights. Created in 1963, Bonalumi's *Rosso* is an intimate example of his 'extroflexing' canvases, the works for which he is most celebrated. In this example, the rigid square of the red monochrome canvas is disrupted by the bulging protuberances at the centre and on the sides. With these elements, Bonalumi manages to invade the space of the viewer, disrupting the notion of two-dimensionality often associated with painting.

One of the leading members of the Optical-Kinetic art movement, **Getulio Alviani** advanced the kinetic theories of visual perception through the interplay of materials and light. Moving to Milan in 1961, Alviani found himself in the hotbed of a new Post-War Art scene. Alviani's luminous aluminum structures known as *Superfici a testura vibratile*, are his most emblematic works.

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Painted in 1950, **Giorgio de Chirico's** *Il Trovatore* recalls the great series of mannequins that the artist began to paint in 1917 during the height of the First World War. De Chirico's cyclical re-visitation of early themes is the very essence of his whole oeuvre: a pictorial translation of the Nietzschean 'eternal return' theory. As is the case with all the artist's metaphysical works, *Il Trovatore* plunges the viewer into a strange dreamlike world. This is the outcome of pluralistic light sources, exaggerated elongated shadows and illogical perspective. An overall feeling of ghostly stillness offsets de Chirico's rendering of the composition. The scene is momentous, disturbing and mysterious. For him, the impossible angles and geometry of the constructions that form these strange wooden constructed figures are architectural elements that attempt to map and outline the contours of the poetic soul. Their very physical impossibility demonstrates the everyday world as a façade. And the allusions to Renaissance painting are clear for, *Il Trovatore*, is a re-working of Antonello da Messina's St Sebastian and Andrea Mantegna's Martyrdom of St Sebastian respectively.

By the time he painted *Fiori*, in 1949, **Giorgio Morandi**, was considered to be the pre-eminent painter living in Italy. The painting is an intimate and absorbing picture showing one of Morandi's most-favoured themes: flowers. He had begun painting pictures of flowers in his early teens and returned to the subject throughout his career. Morandi's art is an art of stillness, and this is something that is clearly translated into this jewel-like piece of meditative tranquillity. That stillness was emphasised by the fact that Morandi used dried or silk flowers as his subjects, rather than fresh blooms. Therefore, this is no insight into fading beauty and life, but rather a more philosophical quest for pictorial harmony, captured here in both the composition and the subtle use of colour and tone which results in a picture of extreme elegance.

Salvatore Mangione known as **Salvo**, painted *Ottomania* in 1987. The artist who lived in Turin became part of the dynamic group of artists developing the Arte Povera movement. However, after an intense period of experimentation with various mixed-media, Salvo pivoted away from conceptual work and began to explore the radical and complex possibilities distinctive to figurative painting. Even though the present work recalls the Futurists and Expressionists in their bold colours and naïve forms, it remains entirely unique. Salvo resisted defined labels and movements, creating a compelling portrayal of cities and landscapes.

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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 early 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. 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), Artissima (Turin), FIAC (Paris), Frieze Masters (London), miart (Milan) and TEFAF (Maastricht and New York).

NOTES TO EDITORS

ITALIANS - A collective booth of 8 Italian galleries supported by the Italian Cultural Institute in Hong Kong

Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre
1 Harbour Road
Wan Chai, Hong Kong, China
Booth 1D28

Private View (by invitation only)

Wednesday, May 19, and Thursday, May 20, 2021, 2pm to 8pm HKT

Friday, May 21, 2021, 2pm to 4pm HKT

Saturday, May 22, and Sunday, May 23, 2021, 12noon to 2pm HKT

Vernissage

Friday, May 21, 2021, 4pm to 9pm HKT

Show Hours

Saturday, May 22, 2021, 2pm to 8pm HKT

Sunday, May 23, 2021, 2pm to 6pm HKT

<https://www.artbasel.com/hong-kong>

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