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Artefiera to Turn 40 With Showcase of Best Italian Art: Preview

BY PIA CAPELLI | JANUARY 04, 2016



Alberto Burri, A.1, 1953
(Tornabuoni Arte)

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Artefiera celebrates its 40th anniversary this month with a “special edition” devoted to Modern and Contemporary Italian art.

It will span more than 150 years – from the end of the 19th century to ultra-contemporary artworks, fresh out of artists’ studios.

From January 29 to February 1, some 11,500 square meters of Bologna Fiere will host 221 exhibitors, including 190 galleries displaying 2,200 works of art by more than 1,200 artists.



The fair is expanding with a third pavilion adding to the usual two. The increase in the number of applications mirrors demand for Italian Art in international markets. The first-floor pavilion is also needed to make more space for the section devoted to photography, produced for a third year in collaboration with the Milanese MIA Photo Fair.

The exhibition will be divided into sections. First, the Main Section, within which there will be a specially curated area named “The

Protagonists”, created with the contribution of Galleria Continua, Galleria Milano, Lia Rumma, Studio La Città, and Galleria Tega.

Then there is the Solo Show and New Proposal sections, featuring works of artists under the age of 35, and photography.

Still, the greatest appeal that Artefiera has for many Italian and European collectors mainly comes from the big names (or rediscoveries) from the 1960s and 1970s. This means Fontana, Manzoni, Bonalumi, Castellani, Scheggi, followed by the generation of Gianni Colombo, Gianni Piacentino and Ettore Spalletti, and movements like Analytic Painting, Kinetic Painting, Arte Povera, and Transavanguardia. The names are the principal reasons “everyone in Italy goes to Artefiera”, many of the dealers remark while talking to Blouin Artinfo.

“Artefiera is a transversal, transgenerational, anti-snob fair”, says Giovanni Bonelli.

“It is, among Italian fairs, the one that’s best connected to the Italian market: collectors look for solid artists with a strong, or growing, international reputation, and in Bologna it’s not difficult to sell works priced between 2,000 and 500,000 euros,” notes Lorenzo Poggiali.

“Some artists and movements from the 1970s are still comparatively affordable, like Pietro Dorazio, Gruppo T, Gruppo N”, adds Davide Mazzoleni.

The artistic directors of Artefiera, Giorgio Verzotti and Claudio Spadoni, have invited all galleries to combine established and mid-career authors with works by artists under the age of 40. A committee composed by Italian and international curators and museum directors (Francesco Bonami, Luca Lo Pinto, Hou Hanru, Andrea Bellini to name just a few) select the best among these younger artists and include their works in “Arte Fiera 40”: an exhibition, also curated by Verzotti and Spadoni, that celebrates the 40th anniversary of the fair through a selection of the most relevant works of Italian Masters exhibited at Artefiera in the past.

“Arte Fiera 40” takes place across two locations. At the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Bologna, the public will see works by artists who have experienced the greatest commercial and critical success after showing at Artefiera. The event continues at Mambo - Museum of Modern Art Bologna - with a permanent exhibition of works acquired by Bologna Fiere over 40 years.

Other events include conversations, curated by Marcella Beccaria and Riccarda Mandrini, where artists, designers, art market experts, curators and patrons of the arts (such as Michelangelo Pistoletto, Alberto Garutti, Alessandro Mendini, Jean Minguet, Marino Golinelli and Andrea Zegna among others) will discuss art advisory strategies, art market reports, museums of the future, non-profit art spaces and artists residencies.

On January 29, a special screening of Matthew Barney’s film “River of Fundament” (2014) will take place at Teatro Comunale of Bologna, as a national première for Italy - a €25 ticket granting access to both projection and fair will be online from January 7.

On Saturday, January 30, the Art City White Night will keep Bologna awake with openings, vernissages, performances and special events.

Artefiera is at Bologna Fiere, Bologna, from January 29 to February 1. Full program, tickets and information is at www.artefiera.it

