

## BORTOLAMI

**Claudio Parmiggiani**

**9 September – 29 October 2022**

**Opening Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 – 8:00pm**

Bortolami Gallery is pleased to present Claudio Parmiggiani's third solo exhibition at the gallery.

Parmiggiani occupies a singular and fundamental position in post-war Italian art history. For the past five decades, in line with the tenets of Arte Povera, he has produced artwork with an almost absolute scarcity of materials. His ongoing and celebrated series, *Delocazione*, begun in the 1970s, is composed of panels created solely with fire and the traces it produces. Parmiggiani organizes objects on the face of two-dimensional surfaces, subjecting them to a controlled blaze. Once the fire is extinguished, a gray soot settles and outlines the artist's tableaux, fixing what was once present by their hollowed absence.

For his latest exhibition, Parmiggiani has produced a new suite of artworks using this striking process. Each identically sized panel is composed of a shelf housing differing bottles, the vessels' silhouettes crystallized against flittering backdrops of grays. The subject matter conjures the long shadow cast by the still life tradition, a genre wherein the inanimate is entrusted as a cypher for humanist thought. While the stark palette and subject also evoke the celebrated paintings of another Italian giant, Giorgio Morandi. Parmiggiani in fact worked in the latter's atelier at the beginning of his career, and this series balances the allusion to influence and the power of history to act as muse. Morandi's mastery of light reflected against the humble subjects of everyday life continues to be a rich arena for inspiration mined by Parmiggiani. In their concise lexicon, these *Delocazione* artworks hold a web of memory and its signification, wherein time accrues richness in its passing.

Artworks from earlier decades are also on view as part of the exhibition, creating a philosophical throughline across half a century of Parmiggiani's output. In one piece, *Untitled* (1996), a model boat is fastened by the taught chord from which it is suspended, under and against a splattering of black paint. The ship seems at once caught in a torrent and found in a moment of complete stillness. An untitled sculpture work from 1975 balances two items in a simple assemblage, a classical bust cut into and fitted with an oil lantern, partly couched in a shared dense black ash. Symbols of enlightenment's command over knowledge are here caught at a moment of quiet destruction, recalling civilizations' motioning towards disasters of their own making. Elsewhere, dangling black sacs, like balloons or heavy sandbags, weigh against a luminous yellow backdrop. The black shapes of the work suggest shadows, like spectral agents, continuing to evoke the limits between what is present and what is absent.

**Claudio Parmiggiani** was born in Luzzara, Italy in 1943 and lives and works in Parma, Italy. Parmiggiani's work has been widely exhibited in international museums and collections. His work has been shown six times at the Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy (1972, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1995 and 2015). Solo exhibitions have been held at the Frist Museum, Nashville TN (2019); Accademia di Francia Villa Medici, Roma, Italy (2015); Ex Oratorio di San Lupo, Bergamo, Italy (2014); Chiesa San Fedele, Milan, Italy (2014); Palais des Beaux Arts - BOZAR, Brussels, Belgium (2013); Palazzo del Governatore, Parma, Italy (2010); Collège des Bernardins, Paris, France (2008); Palazzo Fabroni Arti Visive Contemporanee, Pistoia, Italy (2007); The Musée des Beaux-arts de Nantes, Nantes, France (2007); The Grand Palais, Paris, France (2005); Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Bologna (2003); Museum of Art, Tel-Aviv, Israel (2003) and Musée Fabre, Montpellier, France (2002). His work is part of the collections of Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Museo de Bellas Artes of Havana, Havana, Cuba; The National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavík, Iceland; Mamco - Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland; Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, France; Francois Pinault Foundation, Venice, Italy and Museo del Novecento, Milan, Italy.