

ANSELM KIEFER

Voglio vedere le mie montagne - für Giovanni Segantini

Opens Sunday 12 February 2023, 12:30 pm - 6:00 pm

Galleria Lia Rumma | via Vannella Gaetani 12 | NAPLES

Gallery opening times: Tuesday-Saturday 11:00 am - 1:30 pm / 2:30 pm - 7:00 pm

The Lia Rumma Gallery is delighted to announce the opening of Anselm Kiefer's new solo exhibition *Voglio vedere le mie montagne - für Giovanni Segantini* on Sunday 12 February 2023, marking the artist's return to Naples.

The title of the new series of paintings presented at the exhibition, which draws on the words uttered by the artist Giovanni Segantini shortly before his death, also refers to a work by Joseph Beuys whom Kiefer met while studying at the Dusseldorf Academy of Arts (Kunstsakademie). However, Kiefer states that "the title is often not an explanation of the image but rather an allusion". Like many of his other works, inspired by verses of his favourite poets, the myths and legends of many different cultures and places, and thus full of lyrical and epic influences and echoes, the artist in this case creates a moving, poetic landscape of peaks and mountain tops that transcend those adored by the symbolist painter Segantini. Mountain chains are viewed as ideal yet threatening places, testifying to the turbulence of the ever-changing natural world in which painting is based on sensation, using a stratification of colour and mood. According to Kiefer, who conducts himself as an alchemist-poet constantly in search of new forms to set against the status quo, trying to redesign a new order in the world, the creative act always remains a continuous process of transformation, an unfinished undertaking to which one can return. Even more than the "mountains" painted by Segantini, the crux lies in what takes place between them or outside the paintings because, as Kiefer explains, "art is like a walk along a mountain ridge where there is a risk of falling down either one side or the other".

The large paintings on display in the gallery portray a powerful, unsettling landscape. Kiefer employs writing as a 'poetic word' on the picture surface that moves freely - in this case the words *Voglio vedere le mie montagne - für Giovanni Segantini* return and chase each other - above the dark, earthy peaks, illuminated by crepuscular or nocturnal rays of light. But the writing, always done in his own hand, has an ambiguous function, providing the image with an occasionally unexpected interpretation, as in the case of *Die Windsbraut* (The Bride of the Wind) where a rocky windswept landscape is overlain by the title of a famous painting by Oskar Kokoschka which depicts the artist embracing his lover Alma Mahler as if they had been swept away by a storm. The idea for the work probably came to him following a trip to Naples in April 1913 when the couple were caught by surprise by a sudden, violent storm.

Anselm Kiefer. Born in 1945 in Donaueschingen, Anselm Kiefer has been working in Paris and Croissy since 2007. After studying law, and Romance languages and literature, he devoted himself entirely to painting. He attended the School of Fine Arts at Fribourg-im-Brigau then the Art Academy in Karlsruhe while maintaining a contact with Joseph Beuys. Kiefer's work has been collected by and shown at major museums throughout the world. In 2004 Kiefer realized *The Seven Heavenly Palaces* the first permanent installation in Italy, at Hangar Bicocca in Milan, curated by Lia Rumma. In 2007, he became the first artist to be commissioned to install a permanent work at the Louvre. The same year, he inaugurated the *Monumenta* exhibitions series at the Grand Palais in Paris, with works paying special tribute to the poets Paul Celan and Ingeborg Bachmann. Anselm Kiefer was awarded the Praemium Imperiale Prize in Tokyo in 1999, and in 2008 received the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade. In 2010 Anselm Kiefer was appointed to the Chair of Artistic Creation at the renowned Collège de France in Paris, where he delivered nine lectures entitled *Art will survive its ruins*. In 2014, the Royal Academy of Arts in London presented his first retrospective to be held in the UK. In 2015 the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and the Centre Pompidou in Paris showed major retrospectives of his artist books, paintings and installations. In 2022 the installation *Questi scritti, quando verranno bruciati, daranno finalmente un po' di luce*, inspired by the verses of the Venetian poet Andrea Emo, was set up in the Sala dello Scrutinio of the Doge's Palace in Venice.