

A ARTE INVERNIZZI

PRESS RELEASE

MAURO STACCIOLI. SCULPTURE AS TRANSFORMATIONAL THOUGHT

OPENING THURSDAY 9 MARCH 2023 6 P.M.

The A arte Invernizzi gallery opens a solo exhibition by Mauro Staccioli on Thursday 9 March 2023, at 6 p.m., ten years after his last solo show in the same spaces, and five years since he passed away. Mauro Staccioli (Volterra 1937-2018 Milan) was one of the most important Italian sculptors of the twentieth century and he was greatly appreciated internationally. In the early 1970s, he started creating hundreds of what he called his "intervention sculptures". He made these large temporary or permanent installations on an environmental scale all over the world. Their creation was always directly linked to where they were built, and in turn they modified the physical and conceptual coordinates of the place. This made the work not self-referential but active as a presence that would interact with its setting. These visual signs cut across the decades and through the changes in the world, place after place, year after year, creating a map from Volterra to Milan, to the Venice Biennale and documenta in Kassel, and to Munich and Brussels, San Diego and Seoul, Tel Hai and Quito.

The exhibition includes a number of sculptures in various materials – such as concrete, iron, and weathering steel – that are typical of his sculptural art, and a selection of works on paper that illustrate his interactions with the various places. Staccioli's focus was constant, from conception through to the planning stage, and then to the actual creation, always closely interacting with the place, with space and with the pre-existing forms and identities of each setting. This is a distinctive and original component of his "intervention sculptures", which graft themselves onto the places where they are located, bringing in their autonomous dialogue and alterity, always helping write a new history of the places where they are located.

The exhibition starts with a work, in concrete and iron, that greets the visitor at the entrance: this work from 1976 is emblematic of the artist's first period, with the iron tip that emerges from the concrete having the two-fold effect of attraction and repulsion. These were years when Staccioli was one of the pioneers of a form of sculpture that left the usual spaces of museums and galleries and became part of the urban fabric and of the territory, with its presence being felt in a space that was both physical and social.

Three series of works in weathering steel are shown upstairs: their sculptural forms recall famous works created in public spaces, interacting with their settings. These include the "intervention sculpture" consisting of an inverted arch designed for the opening of the Luigi Pecci Centre for Contemporary Art and for the Olympic village in Seoul. Then there is the crescent-shaped work created for the Fridericianum in Kassel in 1988 and now reconfigured to a design by the artist in the Intesa Sanpaolo – Gallerie d'Italia collections in Milan. Lastly, we find the ellipse that recalls the *Primi passi* [*First Steps*] work created in Volterra in 2009.

The weathering steel projects for the "Forme perdute" ["Lost Forms"] series are on display in the last room on the upper floor. These large-format circular-based shapes were created for the 2012 solo exhibition in the spaces of the A arte Invernizzi gallery and are now on permanent display at the Museo d'Arte Contemporanea all'Aperto in Morterone, where visitors can see *Tondi* [*Tondos*], another of his "intervention sculptures", to which some of the drawings on display are linked.

Six sculptures from the "Sbarra e cemento" ["Bar and Concrete"] cycle, which the artist conceived in the 1970s, are shown on the lower floor, where they enter into a surprising dialogue with the columns of the exhibition space. These works come from the germinal period of Staccioli's artistic career and they contain the same intrinsic energy that can be perceived in all his works on an environmental scale, which enables them to enter into a relationship with the space around them. With their material tangibility they fit into the environment and give it a new perspective, inviting the viewer to go through it in a new, mindful manner.

A bilingual catalogue with an essay by Francesca Pola will be published on the occasion of the exhibition. It will include iconographic and bibliographic material that retraces Staccioli's works over the course of twenty-five years in collaboration with A arte Invernizzi, both at the gallery and in public and private spaces.

EXHIBITION: MAURO STACCIOLI. SCULPTURE AS TRANSFORMATIONAL THOUGHT

CATALOGUE WITH ESSAY BY: FRANCESCA POLA

EXHIBITION PERIOD: 9 MARCH - 4 MAY 2023

OPENING HOURS: FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY 10 A.M. - 1 P.M. 3-7 P.M., SATURDAY BY APPOINTMENT