

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**D'ICI À L'INFINI****GIOVANNI ANSELMO, LOTHAR BAUMGARTEN, MARISA MERZ, ETTORE SPALLETTI**

10 March – 29 April 2023

Opening reception: Friday 10 March, 6 – 9 pm

Marian Goodman Gallery is pleased to present *D'ici à l'infini* (From Here to Infinity) a group show that brings together four major European artists for the first time: Giovanni Anselmo, Lothar Baumgarten, Marisa Merz and Ettore Spalletti. Through their respective oeuvre, they all defied the formal conventions of visual arts and developed a profound and conceptual practice focused on our relationship with nature and the universe. The works in the show - in wood, paper, granite, earth, clay, impasto, alabaster - not only convey a sense of tangible reality, a *hic et nunc* presence, but they also instill a sense of boundless time and space. They exist as a coherent reality, independent of reality itself, allowing viewers to mentally project themselves beyond the exhibition space.

Giovanni Anselmo's notable interest in the force of gravity and energy of the Earth, in our connection with the cosmos, dates back to an August day in 1965 when, after climbing to the top of Mount Stromboli, he had a searing observation of his own shadow projected towards 'infinity.' This seminal experience has infused his practice to this day. *Il sentiero verso oltremare* (1992-2023) consists of a path of earth traced on the floor that connects two vertical stripes of ultramarine paint applied on two opposing walls. The blue pigment, originally sourced from imported lapis lazuli, signifies a window to a distant horizon. In keeping with his practice of associating several old pieces, Giovanni Anselmo creates a new proposal by linking the path to one of his emblematic works, *Direzione* (1967-2023). Consisting of a compass embedded in a block of granite, it indicates with precision the direction of the Earth's magnetic North Pole. While one of the projections of *Particolare* (1972-2023) is oriented directly to the granite block, the other is pointed in another direction within the space, becoming visible only on furtive contact with a body or an object. The notions of visibility and infinitude are further investigated in *Particolare del lato in alto della prima I di Infinito 25.04.75* (1975), a series of graphite drawings on paper which reveal only a 'visible and measurable detail' of the concept of infinity, in the form of the letter i.

In his multidisciplinary practice, Lothar Baumgarten referred to different systems of thought and representations, focusing on non-Western cosmogonies and cultures. Created prior to his initiatory journey to South America which involved an eighteen-month stay with the Yanōmami indigenous community in southern Venezuela, the early work *Kosmos* (1969) is composed of hazelnut wood branches and a figure of a bird in paper wrapped in a map of the constellations. Echoing his iconic film *Origin of the Night (Amazon Cosmos)*, (1973-1977) which references the myth of the origin of the night for the Tupi people, the 1969 work links terrestrial ecosystems to the immensity of space. Like his photographs from the series *Culture-Nature (Manipulated Reality)* (1968-72) as well as his ephemeral sculptural interventions all conceived at the same time in the Rhineland, *Kosmos* transports us by thought, momentarily, elsewhere.

Considering forms as fluid and fragile, Marisa Merz would reshape her earlier works in varying arrangements based on the exhibition space by employing humble materials and non-traditional techniques. The correlation between natural materials and the idea of infinity is also significant in her work, through the representation of human forms that lie between abstraction and figuration. A prominent example is *Cielo e Terra* (2005), where the artist juxtaposed a large drawing with spray paint and pastel on Japanese paper and a small clay sculpture placed on a tall tripod, as is *Untitled* (2004), a drawing with graphite, spray paint and gold pigment on paper. These feminine and enigmatic forms inhabit Merz's work like spiritual or ghostly figures, seeming to float through time and space, and relying, in turn, on the imagination of the viewers to detach them from reality.

Acclaimed for his subtle exploration of color and light, Ettore Spalletti has founded a minimal aesthetic through pictorial or sculptural works, which, when presented simultaneously, often form an immersive installation. The monochrome works *Così com'è, luna* (2018) and *Senza titolo, (grigio chiaro)* (2019) result from the unchanging process initiated by the artist in the early 1970s – the meticulous application of multiple layers of *impasto* at the same time of each day over the course of weeks. Like all his work, they are inspired by the landscapes of Abruzzo, the region on the Adriatic coast of Italy where the artist has lived and worked all his life. Each color recalls a specific element of the natural panorama that surrounded the artist. Whether set in alabaster in *Scatola di colore* (1991) or applied on wooden panels in *Così com'è, luna*, the colored material encloses space and time. But what is to be contemplated is not so much this materiality as the spirituality infused into the work.

GALERIE MARIAN GOODMAN

The title of the exhibition *D'ici à l'infini* is taken from Anne Rorimer's essay "Giovanni Anselmo: From here to infinity, 1965 - 2015" published in the exhibition catalogue of the artist at Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli-Torino in 2016.

Giovanni Anselmo was born in 1934 in Borgofranco d'Ivrea in Italy, he lives and works in Turin. He is considered as one of the key protagonists of the Arte Povera movement at the end of the 1960s. He received the prestigious Golden Lion Award at the Venice Biennale in 1990. His first solo show was organized in 1973 by Kunstmuseum Luzern, Lucerne, Switzerland. His work has been and continues to be widely exhibited in Europe and the United States at museums such as Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Roma, Italy (2020); Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice, Italy (2017); Castello di Rivoli, Torino, Italy (2016); Musée d'art moderne et contemporain de Saint-Etienne Métropole, France (2015); Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Switzerland (2013); Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna (Italy); S.M.A.K, Ghent, Belgium (2005); Museum Kurhaus, Kleve, Germany (2004); Palais des Beaux-Arts, Bruxelles, Belgium (2002); The Renaissance Society, Chicago, United States (1997) or l'ARC, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France (1985).

Lothar Baumgarten was born in 1944 in Rheinsberg, Germany and died in Berlin, Germany in 2018. He was awarded the Golden Lion, First Prize of the 41st Venice Biennale, Italy (1984). Baumgarten exhibited internationally and major solo shows have been held in museums such as the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia and the Palacio de Cristal, Madrid, Spain (2016); Fundación Botín, Santander, Spain (2012); Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany (2011); Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria (2009); Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), Spain (2008); Museum Kurhaus, Kleve, Germany (2006); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA (2003); Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany (2001); National Museum of Modern Art in Kyoto and Tokyo, Japan (1996); Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA (1993); Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, USA (1987); Musée National d'Art Moderne - Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France (1987); and ARC/Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France (1986).

Marisa Merz was born in 1926 in Turin, Italy where she lived and worked until her death in 2019. She is one of the only women artists associated with Arte Povera. In 2013 Marisa Merz was awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement. *The Sky Is a Great Space*, the first major American retrospective exhibition, was held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, in 2017, and then presented in Europe at the Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art, Porto, and the Museum der Moderne, Salzburg, in 2018. Her museum solo shows include those at The Philadelphia Museum of Art (2019-2022); MACRO Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Roma (2016); Serpentine Gallery, London (2013); Fondazione Merz, Turin (2012); Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice (2011); Centre international d'art et du paysage, Ile de Vassivière (2010); Museo MADRE, Naples (2007); Kunstmuseum Winterthur (2003 and 1995); Galleria d'Arte Moderna Villa delle Rose, Bologna (1998); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1996); Musée National d'Art Moderne - Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (1994).

Ettore Spalletti was born in 1940 in Cappelle sul Tavo (Pescara), Italy where he lived and worked up until his death in 2019. Spalletti has been the subject of major international exhibitions at the Galleria Nazionale d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Rome, Italy (2021); Nouveau Musée National d Monaco, Monaco, France (2019); Palazzo Cini, Venice, Italy (2015) and a retrospective simultaneously presented at three Italian institutions: MADRE – Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donnaregina, Naples, GAM – Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin, and MAXXI – Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo, Rome (2014). Other notable solo exhibitions include GNAM – Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome (2010); Académie de France, Villa Medici, Rome (2006); the Henry Moore Institute, Leeds (2005); Castello di Rivoli - Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli, Turin (2004); Fundación la Caixa, Madrid (2000); Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Strasbourg (1998); MUHKA – Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Antwerp (1995); and Museum Folkwang, Essen (1982).

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