

# L'ESPRIT DE L'ESCALIER

MICHELE SPANGHERO

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2023

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024



OPENING: Saturday, DECEMBER 2<sup>nd</sup>, from 5pm to 8pm

Opening Times & Hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 10.30am - 6.30pm

During January 2024 - by appointment only

*«He said to me with an ironical air, "Then, if Voltaire is overcome by the mere narrative of a pathetic incident, and Sedan is undisturbed by the sight of a friend in tears, Voltaire is the ordinary man and Sedan the man of genius." This apostrophe put me out, and reduced me to silence, because the man of sensibility, like me, is wrapped up in the objection to his argument, loses his head, and does not find his answer until he is leaving the house.»*

- Denis Diderot, *The Paradox of Acting*, 1770

Michele Spanghero's (Gorizia, 1979) proposal for his first solo show at the Venetian space of Alberta Pane gallery stems from considerations some recent, some long-standing, which have resurfaced or emerged while working on his retrospective *Tracks*, on view until December

10<sup>th</sup> at Bevilacqua La Masa Foundation, at the Palazzetto Tito venue in Venice.

Starting from the late 18th-century Diderottian expression, *L'esprit de l'escalier* unfolds among sculptural-installative works, photographs and drawings, within a conceptual use of sound.

Concealing and unmasking, the artist conceives time-layered works, in which the absence and the impossibility of memory are central; form and thought sometimes coincide with an almost miraculous ideal and structural tension, sometimes with a poetic resignation when facing the impossibility of making one's voice heard or grasping the elusive.

For this exhibition at the gallery, which dialogues with the retrospective at Bevilacqua La Masa Foundation, the artist thus suggests a caustic and sensitive reflection, in which second thoughts, reconsiderations and uncertainties inherent in art making become form, substance and unspoken affirmation of meaning.

If at Palazzetto Tito visitors have the opportunity to immerse themselves in a universe of sound and projects, in the gallery's exhibition spaces the public can instead follow the unfolding of an *in fieri* thought: consistent with the reconsiderations inherent in the "spirit of staircase"<sup>1</sup>, the artist imagines the exhibition as a fertile and permeable ground in which new works can be integrated over the course of the exhibition.

A versatile artist whose practice ranges from the field of sound art to sculpture, drawing and photographic research, Michele Spanghero, who has both a Literature and musical background, has conceived a performance that will be presented on the occasion of a Venetian Gallery Weekend, which will be held on Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 5pm.

Thanks to the collaboration with Cinemazero, video and sound will be the key elements in a new, site-specific intervention marking the end of the exhibition, and aiming at highlighting the versatility of the artist's practice.



Michele Spanghero, *Nothing To Say*, 2021, concrete, 23 x 37 x 23 cm

<sup>1</sup> French expression invented by the Illuminist philosopher Denis Diderot, *L'esprit de l'escalier* defines that regrettable situation in which the appropriate response to a verbal provocation comes not at the appropriate moment, but too late to be used.

**Michele Spanghero**  
(IT, 1979)

Michele Spanghero's artistic activity spans the fields of visual and sound arts. Mentioned as "Best Young Italian Artist 2016" according to "Artribune" magazine, he has exhibited in group and solo exhibitions in various international institutions such as School of the Art Institute (Chicago), Cinémathèque québécoise (Montreal), Hyundai Motorstudio (Beijing), Museum of Modern Art (Istanbul), Darb 1718 Centre (Cairo), Tuileries Garden (Paris), Le Centquatre (Paris), Ars Electronica festival (Linz), Technisches Sammlungen (Dresden), MAGASIN Centre National d'Art Contemporain (Grenoble), Kapelica Gallery (Ljubljana). His activities in Italy include 16th Quadriennale d'Arte (Rome), Mart (Rovereto), Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria (Perugia), Fondazione Benetton (Treviso), Palazzo Te (Mantua), Galleria Civica (Modena), OGR (Turin), Tempio di Adriano (Rome), Museo d'Arte Contemporanea (Lissone) and Castello di Miramare (Trieste)

His work is part of private and public collections including, among others, Mart (Rovereto), Museo Ettore Fico (Turin), La Gaia Collection (Cuneo), Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea 'Casa Cavazzini' (Udine), Musei Civici (Pordenone), University of Trieste Collection, Punto Fermo Collection (San Vito al Tagliamento), Municipality of Syracuse, Municipality of Turriaco, Oberrauch Collection (Appiano), Château de Vullierens (Switzerland).



M. Spanghero, *Nothing To Say*, 2021, engraving on paper, 29,7 x 42 cm



M. Spanghero, *Nothing To See*, 2021, engraving on paper, 29,7 x 42 cm