

CARDI GALLERY

MARIO CEROLI. LA MERAVIGLIA

February 20 – April 6, 2024

Cardi Gallery is pleased to present, from February 20 to April 6, 2024, a solo exhibition of artist Mario Ceroli (Castel Frentano, Chieti, Italy, 1938), whose visual and formal experiments are portrayed in a remarkable setting entitled *La Meraviglia*.

The exhibition involves a selection of sixteen works, many rarely presented to the public, that traces Mario Ceroli's artistic practice, focusing in particular on the production of the 1970s and 1980s. On display in Cardi Gallery's spaces are eight monumental sculptures from the series *Discorsi platonici sulla geometria* and eight material works, which outline a synthesis in the artist's research strongly characterized by skilful woodworking and a strong tension towards the reinterpretation of classical iconography from a contemporary perspective.

The exhibition itinerary is designed to offer visitors a glimpse into Mario Ceroli's rich artistic production, ranging from sculptural research to wall-mounted works.

The ground floor of Cardi Gallery is reserved for the eight impressive works in the series *Discorsi Platonici sulla Geometria*, each of which was created by the artist between 1985 and 1990 in Russian pine wood and up to 3 meters high.

The protagonist of the series is the figure of the giant, depicted in the act of carrying the burden of a selection of imposing geometric figures in which the artist finds a direct reference to the Platonic plan of ideas mentioned in the title. The classical reference model for the series is the myth of Atlas, the titan punished by the gods for his arrogance and forced to carry the weight of the world on his shoulders. Inspired by the traditional iconography that takes its fundamental example in the Farnese Atlas of the second century A.D., Mario Ceroli represents his giants in poses that convey a sense of suffering and fatigue, while translating their muscles and bodies into modular forms that refer to the cubes, cones, prisms and pyramids they are condemned to carry.

The exhibition continues upstairs with a focused examination of the material works, to which the artist has devoted himself since the late 1970s. The shapes and colors of wood, often unfinished, are again the protagonists of pieces such as *La Nascita di Venere*, *Prova d'Orchestra* and *Inferno*, which combine shrubs, trunks and twigs in the creation of geometric silhouettes that elude the bidimensionality of the painting and reveal a consistent attention to the processing of materials.

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SOCIAL NETWORKS:
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INFO:
Da lunedì a venerdì dalle 09:30 alle 18:00
Sabato dalle 11:00 alle 18:00

PRESS:
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In a combination of materials reminiscent of Arte Povera and meanings that approach Conceptual Art, Mario Ceroli embraces the lesson of artists such as Giulio Paolini, Jannis Kounellis or Claudio Parmiggiani and keeps his own stylistic authenticity, enlarged in terms of dramatic and monumental power.

BIO

Born in 1938 in Castel Frentano (Chieti), Mario Ceroli studied at the Art Institute in Rome, with teachers such as Fazzini, Leoncillo and Colla, and devoted himself primarily to ceramics. Ceroli had a fortunate and happy debut, winning the Young Sculpture Award at the National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome in 1958. During these years he refined his art by working with ceramics at his teacher Leoncillo's studio. Later Ceroli focused on wood in order to emphasise the primary element, the emerging meaning of real things, the symbolic value of the work, the artist's founding gesture. He thus stripped the courtly and 'noble' material of its value in sculpture, investing the natural and poor material with a new and strong capacity for representation. Contrary to popular belief, however, he does not use wood from packing cases, but more simply raw wood. In parallel, he developed a curiosity for various natural materials such as soil, glass and ice.

In 1966, he established himself on the international scene at the Venice Biennale by winning the Gollin Prize for Cassa Sistina.

He has also produced important public works such as Il Cavallo (The Horse) of RAI in Saxa Rubra, La Casa di Nettuno (The House of Neptune) in Bologna, the Church and Theatre in Porto Rotondo, L'Uomo di Leonardo Da Vinci (The Man of Leonardo Da Vinci) at Fiumicino Airport, the Church of Tor Bella Monaca in Rome, the Church of Naples at the Centro Direzionale, L'Albero della Vita (The Tree of Life) in Sestriere, Turin. He lives and works actively in Rome.