

PAOLO ICARO

Overall

Opening Saturday 6 April 2024, 3.00 pm – 7.00 pm

Galleria Lia Rumma | Via Stilicone 19 | MILAN

Gallery opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday 11.00 am -1.30 pm / 3.00 pm – 7.00 pm

The Lia Rumma Gallery is delighted to announce the opening on Saturday 6 April 2024 of the solo exhibition by the artist Paolo Icaro, the first to be held in the Milan gallery.

The poetics of Paolo Icaro – one of the leading figures of the art of the 1960s, close to the “Arte Povera” movement – is marked by his continuous attempts to go beyond the idea of sculpture as an object and transform it into a process and experience. Sculpture therefore becomes more a need for existence rather than for form, which gives rise to images of gravity and lightness, matter and abstraction, restraint and excess. By deconstructing the language of sculptural action, Icaro conducts an ongoing exploration of space and the way it is perceived, and of the infinite statuesque and metaphorical possibilities provided by different materials. “Sculpture comes about when I give form to the idea that lies in mental space,” states the artist.

“The overall vision of the exhibition at the Lia Rumma Gallery,” explains Paolo Icaro, “is conceived as a work in different times and different spaces” arranged on the three floors of the gallery. At the entrance, on the ground floor, visitors will see the work *Foresta eccentrica, nera* (1967), a large structure made of elements of black steel which, like a skeleton of “eccentric geometry” (as it is defined by the artist), designs an inhabitable space to be experienced by the body (the body of the artist who constructed it to match his own size and that of the visitor who will pass through it), to be measured in a physical and mental sense, to be explored in the becoming of time.

Moving up to the first floor, there is a multi-coloured landscape called *Racconto dei racconti* or “Tale of tales” (1969-2021). This environmental installation is made up of numerous parallelepipeds of materials, with which the artist has varying degrees of “empathy”, on which the word “racconto” (story or tale) is inscribed. The “racconti” are placed on the floor on measured sheets of lead. “In order to interpret the silence of the “Racconti”,” says Paolo Icaro, “I felt the need to involve the musician Alessandro Petrolati, a pianist and composer of electronic music who has prepared a minimal “effect”, so delicate and interrupted by silences, that it is almost inaudible, in the form of a “hum” that animates the air in which the 64 “Racconti” silently breathe”.

On the second floor, a series of works on paper, entitled *I tempi del disegno* (2019), create a new relationship between the sign of the drawing and the paper. Paper is treated as a material sheet made of cellulose, marked, drawn and, lastly, cut: the line on the paper actually enters the paper.

Paolo Icaro (Turin, 1936) lives and works in Tavullia. He studied piano at the Faculty of Literature at the University of Turin. In 1958 he studied with the artist Umberto Mastroianni who gave him the name Icaro (Icarus). In 1965 he was invited to the 9th Rome Quadriennale. In 1967 he had a solo exhibition at the Galleria La Tartaruga and his work featured in the exhibition “Arte Povera Im-Spazio” at the Galleria La Bertesca in Genoa where his work was also the subject of the solo exhibition “Faredisfarerifarevedere 0106768”. In 1968-’69 he took part in the most important exhibitions of the international avant-garde: “Teatro delle mostre” at the Galleria La Tartaruga and “Arte povera più azioni povere” at Amalfi. He was one of the artists to be invited to the two historic exhibitions “Op Losse Schroeven. Situaties en cryptostructuren”, at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and “When Attitudes Become Form” at the Kunsthalle in Bern.

In 1971 he moved to Connecticut for about a decade before returning permanently to Italy. Beginning in the 1980s he held solo shows at the PAC in Milan (1982), at the Palazzina dei Giardini in Modena (1987), at the Galleria Civica d’Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Trento (1995). In 2007 he created a permanent intervention for the Italian Department of the UCLA – University of California in Los Angeles. His most recent solo exhibitions include the following: “Biografia ideale” at the Centro Arti Visive Pescheria in Pesaro (2009); “Paolo Icaro, Unending Incipit” at the Pinacoteca Comunale in Città di Castello (2017); “Le Pietre del Cielo: Paolo Icaro e Luigi Ghirri” at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia in Venice (2017); “Un prato in quattro tempi” at the Università Statale di Milano (2018) and “Paolo Icaro Antologia 1964-2019” at GAM in Turin (2019). In 2021, the work “Polarità” entered the permanent collection of the Pinacoteca in Volterra through the Italian Council IX of the Italian Ministry of Culture. His works are kept in some of the most important international public collections, including the following: Museum voor Hadengaasge Kunst, Gent, Belgium; Alvar Aalto Museo, Jyväskylä, Finland; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; GAM, Turin, Italy; GNAM, Rome, Italy; Collezione dei Musei Civici, Milan, Italy; MAMBO, Bologna, Italy; MAXXI, Rome, Italy; Museo d’Arte Contemporanea di Villa Croce, Genoa, Italy; MUSMA, Matera, Italy; Accademia Nazionale di San Luca, Rome, Italy; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, USA; UCLA, Los Angeles, USA.