

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CLAUDIO PARMIGGIANI

11 SEPTEMBER – 9 OCTOBER 2013

OPENING: TUESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER, 6-8PM

Simon Lee Gallery is pleased to announce the second solo exhibition of the work of renowned Italian artist Claudio Parmiggiani to be held at our London gallery. The exhibition will bring together works in a wide variety of media, with a range of iconographic subjects and from a span of some thirty five years. What links them is the artist's search for an image, an object or an assemblage which transcends time and individual experience to evoke a universal existential and perceptual truth. It is a search which goes to the heart of Parmiggiani's practice.

Parmiggiani has never allied himself with any particular group, but he shared with some of his contemporaries, such as Michelangelo Pistoletto and Giulio Paolini, a progression from conceptual works, including installations, photo-works and books, towards a use of assemblage. In 1970 he exhibited his first *delocazioni*, using powder, smoke and fire to make shadows and imprints on paper and board, which, combined with the subtle interplay of the architecture of the space created a sense of absence and uncertainty.

The earliest work in this exhibition, (*Senza Titolo (tela e campana)*, 1978), in which a bell, cast in iron and apparently ageless, is juxtaposed with a square white canvas, echoes this characteristic technique. The bell's support is charred; the marks made by its burning powder the canvas and become indistinguishable from the shadows cast by the object itself. One of the most recent works, a monumental *delocazione*, spreads out along the length of the gallery and represents a cloud of butterflies rising in flight. Between these two works Parmiggiani describes a landscape of fragility, fleeting sensation and shimmering depth. The imprint of a spider's web, captured again in smoke, a tumbling stack of casts of the heads of the great philosophers, all suggest an excavation of histories and mythologies, made still, silent and out of time. Another major new work comprises an iron anchor, piercing a gallery wall onto which canvases painted with the constellations of the stars have been hung. Both components of the work are familiar forms, rich in evocative and symbolic weight, to which Parmiggiani has turned regularly through his working life. Of this strategy of installation he has written:

'If you make a hole in the wall of any medieval cathedral, blood will come out; if you make a hole in the wall of a museum, nothing comes out. When there's nothing, you have to transform the place, give it a few kicks, shake it up, building another memory in this place without memory – your own. I have an ever-stronger desire, not to produce objects, however refined, not to put objects in space in whatever way, but to create psychological spaces, evocative places that give a jolt to the senses. Places that have a voice, a heart beating in the thickness of the walls. Making the invisible sensible.' (Grenier, Catherine, PARMIGGIANI, Actes Sud, 2008)

Claudio Parmiggiani was born in Italy in 1943. His first major exhibition was held at Liberia Feltrinelli, Bologna in 1965. Parmiggiani has exhibited widely internationally. He has exhibited five times at the Biennale de Venezia (1972, 1982, 1984, 1986 and 1995). A retrospective of his practice between 1960 and 1995 was held at the Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Geneva (1995). Recent solo exhibitions have been held at Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Bologna (2003), The Grand Palais, Paris (2005), The Musée des Beaux-arts de Nantes (2007), the Collège des Bernardins, Paris (2008) and the Palazzo del Governatore, Parma (2010). Most recently his work has been included in the exhibition *Post Classics: The revival of antiquity in contemporary Italian Art*, curated by Vincenzo Trione in the Roman Forum – Palatine, Rome.

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EXHIBITION GUIDE

Clockwise from entrance

Senza Titolo, 1978

Bronze, wood, soot and linen on canvas
47 1/4 x 47 1/4 x 19 5/8 in. (120 x 120 x 50 cm)

Senza Titolo, 2007

Smoke on glass
70 7/8 x 35 3/8 in. (180 x 90 cm)

Senza Titolo, 2012

Smoke and soot on board
45 5/8 x 33 7/8 in. (116 x 86 cm)

Senza Titolo, 2013

Cast gesso
86 parts, each: dimensions variable

Senza Titolo, 2013

Four photographic screenprints on canvas
and cast iron anchor and chain
Four canvases, each: 59 x 59 in. (150 x 150 cm)
Anchor: 59 x 37 3/8 in. (150 x 95 cm)
Installation dimensions, overall: 118 1/8 x
118 1/8 in. (300 x 300 cm)

Senza Titolo, 2011

Smoke and soot on wood
6 panels, overall: 94 5/8 x 307 1/8 in. (240.5 x 780 cm)