

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

VIA FRANCESCO CRISPI 16

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GALLERY HOURS:

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Tue–Sat: 10:30am–7:00pm and by appointment



PIERO GOLIA – *Intermission Paintings*

Tuesday, 9 June – Thursday, 30 July 2015

Opening reception: Tuesday, June 9, from 6:00 to 8:00pm

I don't believe in art as representation. My work belongs to reality and it is affected by reality.

—Piero Golia

Gagosian Rome is pleased to present an exhibition of recent paintings by Piero Golia.

Golia constantly subverts the conventions of contemporary art through concept, form, and act. In January 2006, he vanished from New York City, leaving no trace of his plans or whereabouts, only to resurface three weeks later at the Royal Academy of Arts in Copenhagen to give a lecture on his own disappearance. In 2008 he responded to the standardized brief of art fair booths by compacting a full-size passenger bus down to the six-meter width of the assigned space. *Luminous Sphere* (2010), a mysterious glowing orb installed on the roof of the Standard Hotel on Sunset Boulevard lights up only when he is in Los Angeles, like some sacred presence expressed in L.A. vernacular. In recent works, he presents his colleagues and artworks as miniature bronzes within studio maquettes, like modern-day *Boîte-en-valises*.

Golia's *Intermission Paintings* (2014) are, to some extent, a byproduct of the first phase of his *Comedy of Craft* trilogy, a sculptural performance that he conceived in three acts and directed himself. (One can only speculate on the link to Gogol's famous story "The Nose," a satirical look at castration complex.) In the first act, produced during "Made in L.A." at the Hammer Museum in 2014, Golia had an exact-scale replica carved in foam block of George Washington's nose from Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. In the second act at "Prospect III New Orleans" later in the year, a team of local art students created a plaster mold from the foam replica. In the third and final performance, a bronze cast of the nose will be made from the plaster mold, forever associating America's first President with the psychoanalytical symbol of primal male fear.

For the *Intermission Paintings*—made during a break between the first and second acts of the performative trilogy—Golia took foam offcuts from the initial phase of the Washington nose, embedded them in a hard layer of polymer, then painted them with iridescent nano-pigments used in security ink for printing bank notes. Noble vestiges of an irreverent action, incidental scraps are transformed into dynamic artifacts. The fortuitously formed panels evoke fractured, striated fossils; their story unfolds in rough edges and abrasions, which are preserved in remarkable colors that oscillate as the viewer moves around them-- from red to gold, or silver to green. Within Golia's self-reflexive epic, the *Intermission Paintings* represent a return to the studio and a new approach to painting born out of vicissitudes. Cultivating history, performance, and chance into mercurial relics, Golia continues to elicit meaning from the indifferent laws of chance.

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Piero Golia was born in Naples, Italy in 1974. His work has been shown in major exhibitions in the United States and Europe, including "Uncertain States of America—American Art in the 3rd Millennium," Serpentine Gallery, London (2006); "The Gold Standard," P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York (2007); "Vesuvius," Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2007); "The Nothing and the Being," Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2009); "Double Tumble or the Awesome Twins," a solo show at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2010); California Biennial, Orange County Museum of Art (2010); "Artist's Museum," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2010–11); "Premio Italia," Museo MaXXi, Rome (2011); and "Made in L.A.," Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2014). Golia's work was included in the 55th Venice Biennale (2013). He co-founded the Los Angeles-based Mountain School of Arts in 2005.

For further inquiries please contact the gallery at +39.06.4208.6498 or at roma@gagosian.com. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

Press Enquiries

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Image: *Intermission painting #6 cyan to purple*, 2014, EPS foam, hard coat and pigment, 48 x 48 x 8 inches (121,9 x 121,9 x 20,3cm), Photo by Rob McKeever.

Gagosian Gallery was established in 1980 by Larry Gagosian.