

# GAGOSIAN

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January 24, 2017



## **GIUSEPPE PENONE** EQUIVALENZE

Opening reception:  
Friday, January 27, 6–8PM  
January 27–April 15, 2017

Via Francesco Crispi 16  
00187 Rome

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*The veins of water that pour from the earth flow in trickles that merge, like the branches in the trunk, like the fingers in the palm of a hand, like the bronze in the matrix of a tree.*  
—Giuseppe Penone

Gagosian Rome is pleased to present "Equivalenze / Equivalences" an exhibition of new sculptures by renowned Italian artist Giuseppe Penone.

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A protagonist of the Arte Povera movement, Penone's distinctive oeuvre has evolved through a deeply poetic, active engagement with nature and time, and a belief in the revelatory, transformative powers of art. Beginning with the idea that sculpture originates in primal impulses—filling one's mouth with water, or making direct impressions with the hands—Penone elaborates and enriches his initial gestures through philosophical inquiry and intensive aesthetic process.

In "Equivalenze," Penone uses sculptural attitude and artifice to reveal corresponding systems in organic materials and bodies. Fist-sized terracotta moldings bear the precise imprint of his forceful grip. The terracottas are appended to iron plates, which he has oxidized in areas of repeated strokes. The repetition of blots and arcs yields a lively abstraction that resembles the flickering shadows of a leafy plant or the staccato marks of a Fauvist landscape—the ambiguous zone between nature and art.

Penone's works are bodily memories, materialized. They speak to his belief that we, like rocks, trees, and water, are constantly molding, and being molded by, our environments. Our gestures mirror the twisting and stretching of trees, which contain concentric records of time in their wood. For a new sculpture, *Equivalenze* (2016), Penone made plaster molds of tree parts and cast them in bronze, erecting an artificial tree, piece by piece. From the roots, an anthropomorphic helix of bark emerges, becoming a figure in contrapposto, facing its botanical counterpart. Penone thinks of such convergences as *gesti vegetali* (plant-like gestures). In his hands, the human form is freed from the tree, and the tree, in turn, reveals the visceral qualities of the human body. Using sculptural media and techniques, he releases the animas of things, thus uniting the essence of nature with the sensations of direct human action.

**Giuseppe Penone** was born in 1947 in Garessio, Italy and currently lives and works in Paris, France, and Turin, Italy. His work is featured in institutional collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; MOCA, Los Angeles; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, ON; Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Roma; National Museum of Modern Art Tokyo; Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels; MAXXI – Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI secolo, Rome; Inhotim Centro de Arte Contemporânea, Brumadinho, Minas Gerais, Brazil; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Sammlung Reinking, Hamburg; Neues Museum Weimar, Germany; Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam; Berardo Museum, Lisbon; MAMbo – Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Italy; and ARCO Collection, Madrid.

Recent solo exhibitions include "Retrospective Exhibition 1968–2004," Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2004, traveled to CaixaForum, Barcelona); Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Italy (2008); Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Japan (2009); Musée des Arts Contemporains du Grand-Hornu, Belgium (2010); "Drawings and Sculptures," Fondation De Pont, Tilburg, Noord-Brabant, Netherlands (2010); "The Hidden Life Within," Art Gallery of Ontario, Canada (2011); Centre d'arts et de nature, Parc du Château, Domaine de Chaumont-sur-Loire, France (2012);

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"Entre les lignes," Chapelle du Méjan, Arles, France (2013); "Penone Versailles," Château de Versailles, France (2013); Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Switzerland (2013); "Ideas of Stone (Idee di Pietra)," Madison Square Park, New York (2013–14); "Breath Is A Sculpture," Beirut Art Center, Lebanon (2014); "Prospettiva Vegetale," Forte di Belvedere and Giardino di Boboli, Florence (2014); Musée Grenoble, Paris (2014); "Being the River, Repeating the Forest," Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, TX (2015); "Regards croisés," Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne, Switzerland (2016); Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (2016); "Sculpture," Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Trento and Rovereto, Italy (2016); and "Giuseppe Penone – Anafora," Reggia di Venaria Reale, Turin, Italy. Penone co-represented Italy in the 52nd Biennale di Venezia in 2007, and was awarded the Praemium Imperiale by the Japan Art Association in 2014.

A permanent sculptural installation, titled "Germination," will be presented at the Louvre Abu Dhabi this year. "Matrice / Matrix," a survey exhibition of Penone's work organized and supported by FENDI and curated by Massimiliano Gioni, will be on view at the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana in Rome from January 27 to July 16, 2017.

**Image:** Giuseppe Penone in his Turin studio, Italy, November 2016  
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For further information please contact the gallery at [roma@gagosian.com](mailto:roma@gagosian.com) or at +39.06.4208.6498. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

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