

## JANNIS KOUNELLIS

Massimo De Carlo is pleased to present a new exhibition by Jannis Kounellis, this will be the artists first gallery show in Hong Kong.

Jannis Kounellis was born in Piraeus, Athens, in 1936. In 1956 he moved to Rome where he enrolled at the Academy of Fine Arts. Jannis Kounellis has repeatedly described himself as a Greek person, but self-identified as an Italian artist, who immersed himself immediately in the cultural heritage of Italy.

As a participant in the famous Arte Povera group exhibition organized by Germano Celant in Genoa in 1967, Jannis Kounellis was quickly considered one of the major representatives of this artistic movement. Arte Povera was the most significant and influential avant-garde movement to emerge in Europe in the 1960s. Believing that modernity threatened to erase our sense of memory along with all signs of the past, the Arte Povera group sought to contrast the new and the old in order to complicate our sense of the effects of passing time.

In Rome Kounellis was able to experiment and define his eclectic practice that encompasses a wide range of materials and mediums, converging paint, sculpture and performance.

The exhibition at Massimo De Carlo gallery is structured as a small retrospective that offers to the viewer an overview of Kounellis's most iconic works from the decades that go from 1983 until 2012. The show shines a light on the materiality and three-dimensional elements of his canvases and installations, comprised of ready-made objects that vary from natural elements such as stones and feathers to man-made elements like a knife or a shoe. Most of the canvases on show are dark iron plates, a metallurgic object that has a symbolic meaning: it evokes the industrial landscape of Italy in the late 1960's to early 1970's, signing the moment that Kounellis abandoned traditional art in order to navigate freely the infinite and relative dimensions of space, material and time. 'There is no style', he later asserted. 'What we must try to achieve today is the unity between art and life.'

The selection of works in the exhibition is a synopsis of Kounellis's body of work that has been ichnographically consistent yet stylistically variable: morphologically reminiscent of painting but conceptually distant. Such a juxtaposition of contradictory materials serves perhaps as an allegory for human fragility and the inevitability of historical imperatives. In his best works, the ideas of past, present, and future are unified.

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### **Hard Facts:**

Massimo De Carlo, Hong Kong  
3d Floor Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong  
From 27th of March 2018 until the 19th of May 2018  
Opening reception on Monday 26th of April  
Open Monday to Saturday, 10:30am – 7:00pm

### **For further information and materials:**

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