

Michelangelo Pistoletto *Lavoro*

Mar 22 - Apr 28, 2012

Luhring Augustine is pleased to present *Lavoro*, an exhibition of new work by Michelangelo Pistoletto. In his second exhibition with Luhring Augustine, Pistoletto will present a series of new mirror paintings which explores *lavoro*, or work, as it relates to the subject of construction.

One of the leading figures of the Arte Povera movement, Pistoletto is best known for his mirror paintings, which were first conceived of in 1962 and represent a crucial and ongoing facet of the artist's oeuvre. By adhering an image onto a reflective surface, Pistoletto allows for a dynamic interaction between the art object and the viewer. The movement of the spectator not only animates each painting, but also introduces the element of time to an otherwise static object. Typically the size and scale of floor-length mirrors, these works are placed low to the ground to merge the actual space of the viewing environment with the pictorial space of each work.

With the *Lavoro* series, Pistoletto creates square mirror works that are hung at eye-level like traditional paintings, and emphasize formal elements such as composition and color. The artist presents scenes of industrial machinery, construction materials, and manual labor, each skillfully cropped or framed to achieve a balance of form and a robust, almost sculptural presence. A monumental green cement mixer with patches of rust, a series of anonymous laborers, a worn coil of red cable, a stack of tires on the verge of toppling over - all are unremarkable symbols of construction, which here assume an abstract and stoic beauty. Through our reflection in the mirror, we are compelled to consider these agents and tools of transformation and our physical and social relation to them.

Michelangelo Pistoletto was born in Biella, Italy in 1933. He has exhibited extensively and his work is in the collection of numerous museums including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C.; Tate Modern, London; Castello di Rivoli, Turin, and the Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid. He has participated in several international exhibitions including the Venice Biennale on eleven occasions, and four iterations of Documenta. Recent solo exhibitions have been presented at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, MAXXI, Rome, and the Serpentine Gallery, London and forthcoming projects are planned for Kunsthaus Graz and the Louvre, Paris in 2013. The artist lives and works in Biella, where he founded the interdisciplinary laboratory Cittadellarte.