

ANSELM KIEFER
Fugit Amor

Opening Sunday 28 October 2018, 11.30/18.00
Galleria Lia Rumma | Via Vannella Gaetani 12 | NAPLES
Gallery hours: Tuesday-Saturday 11/13.30 - 14.30/19.00

On 28 October 2018, Galleria Lia Rumma in Naples presents *Fugit Amor*, a new solo exhibition by Anselm Kiefer, marking the artist's return to the city.

Anselm Kiefer's message to us seems to be that love flees and plays with time and history. At the end of the nineteenth century, Auguste Rodin made many copies of his famous sculpture *Fugit Amor* – a man embracing a woman, who appear to be drawn along together by an invisible current. The first version was the one destined for an unfinished work, *The Gates of Hell*. Kiefer has chosen this as a sort of guiding spirit in his new exhibition project designed for the spaces of the Lia Rumma gallery, and it accompanies us through themes and leitmotifs of his work, on a discontinuous chronological journey through a past and a present that are deliberately jumbled together.

Last year, Kiefer entered into one of his original long-distance poetic dialogues with Rodin, exhibiting at the Musée Rodin in Paris, where he declared: "I always feel guilty about painting something reassuring. Great artists are iconoclasts. I know that everything I take on also contains the negation of itself." The act of creation is an ever-evolving process for the German artist, who works like a prophet-chemist, never ceasing to seek out new forms to contrast with the old. A forever unfinished process to which he returns, like Rodin to his sculptures. Step by step, from the first stage of decomposition of ignoble matter all the way to the attainment of the philosopher's stone. And it is from here that we embark on our epistemological journey through the many works dotted around the various rooms of the gallery, filled with history and stories at times forgotten, coming up against the essence of love, which may perhaps be found here and everywhere.

In the large room there are a number of vitrines that, like time capsules, contain organic and other materials, such as ash, iron, lead, leaves, terracotta, flowers, and plants. These are all open to interpretation from the inside outwards. "The glass of the vitrines", says Kiefer, "is a sort of semi-permeable skin that links art to the outside world in a dialectic relationship." The artist has imagined a sequence of connections between the objects in the vitrines, which are as though suspended in limbo, midway between what they were and what they will become. Glass boxes tell stories inspired by the Old and New Testament, as in the case of *Thermutis – Moses, aperiatur terra et germinet salvatorem*. But there are also mysterious renderings of ancient myths. As he has often stated, the artist sees no difference between myth and history. The result is a landscape of poetic ruins that do not entirely reproduce any particular past, but allude to a whole series of pasts – as theorised by Marc Augé, who talks of a pure time without history.

The exhibition ends with two paintings – *Aino* and *Vainamoinen verliert Aino* – inspired by the Finnish epic chivalric poem *Kalevala*, written in 1835 by Elias Lönnrot. The canvases contain passages and names of some of the protagonists (the old vate Väinämöinen and the young Aino) of this national epic which, although centred on the constitutive identity of the Finnish community, embraces universal historical, mythological and religious themes dear to the German artist.

Born in 1945 in Donaueschingen, Anselm Kiefer has been working in Paris and Croissy since 2007. After studying law, and Romance languages and literature, he devoted himself entirely to painting. He attended the School of Fine Arts at Fribourg-in-Brisgau then the Art Academy in Karlsruhe while maintaining a contact with Joseph Beuys. Kiefer's work has been collected by and shown at major museums throughout the world. In 2004 Kiefer realized "The Seven Heavenly Palaces" the first permanent installation in Italy, at Hangar Bicocca in Milan, curated by Lia Rumma. In 2007, he became the first artist to be commissioned to install a permanent work at the Louvre. The same year, he inaugurated the Monumenta exhibitions series at the Grand Palais in Paris, with works paying special tribute to the poets Paul Celan and Ingeborg Bachmann. Anselm Kiefer was awarded the Praemium Imperiale Prize in Tokyo in 1999, and in 2008 received the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade. In 2010 Anselm Kiefer was appointed to the Chair of Artistic Creation at the renowned Collège de France in Paris, where he delivered nine lectures entitled *Art will survive its ruins*. In 2014, the Royal Academy of Arts in London presented his first retrospective to be held in the UK. In 2015 the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and the Centre Pompidou in Paris showed major retrospectives of his artist books, paintings and installations.

