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XIV INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE BIENNALE OF CARRARA

POSTMONUMENT

Curator: Fabio Cavallucci

Carrara, various sites

June 26th –October 31th, 2010 Opening June, 26th, 2010 Press preview June, 25th, 2010

The XIVth International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara, curated by Fabio Cavallucci and entitled *Postmonument* will take place From 26 June to 31 October 2010.

The logical thread running through the whole of this edition is in fact the theme of the monument, or rather the radical process of demonumentalisation which in the last century detached sculpture from its

celebratory and encomiastic functions.

The monument is an emblem of power, a tool for controlling the masses and making them conform, but it is also the catalyst of national values and an irreplaceable piece in the jigsaw of collective memory. It became one of the main targets in revolts and revolutions, and was then wholly swept away when the ideals of democracy and freedom of our time took hold. However, in today's mobile, changing scenario, in this atmosphere of *fin-de-siècle* and of the rewriting of history, alongside the predominant contemporary iconoclasm we can sense a gradual re-emergence of the codes and values of the past. Will we again identify ourselves in new monuments?

It is Carrara which provides the cues and suggestions for specific works. Carrara is in fact an authentic town with marked, clearly-recognisable features: the traces of the hard labour of the quarrymen which remain as sediments in the territory; the unique anarchic tradition; the antiquity of the town centre; and the lively micro-cosmos of the Fine Arts Academy. The Carrara territory, which has always been connected with the quarrying and working of marble, and where Michelangelo and Canova took up residence while they searched for the right material for their works, has suffered more than others from the decline of traditional sculpture followed by the collapse of the 20th-century symbols and ideologies. The local context thus acts as a mirror for the cracks in the symbolic and productive system of the whole western world, and it is from a contemplation of this real situation that the guest artists of the exhibition draw their inspiration.

The decision to involve the whole of the town by using multiple exhibition sites (old sculpture laboratories and other abandoned buildings in the centre, where the signs of time and neglect are evident) further expresses the dimension of transition which is the leitmotif of the whole exhibition. It is perhaps easiest to find fertile territory for change where disorientation is most evident. In the exhibition, the theme will be introduced by an ample historical section, with examples of monumental production from the end of the 19th/beginning of the 20th centuries; alongside these will be models of statues from the periods of Fascism and Soviet and Chinese socialist realism. But the central part of the exhibition consists of the works of over 30 contemporary artists from all over the world, including (to name just a few) Paul McCarthy, Antony Gormley, Yona Friedman, Santiago Serra and Monica Bonvicini. Alongside these will be promising young artists such as **Kristina Norman**, who exhibited in the Estonian Pavilion of the 2009 Venice Biennale, Cyprien Gaillard, a finalist in the 2010 Marcel Duchamp Award, and Rossella Biscotti, winner of the Fico ad Artissima 16 Award.

No fewer than 26 of the invited artists will be presenting new productions created specially for the occasion. These have been conceived after on-site inspections and an exploration of the Carrara territory, and they have mostly been created in the town laboratories. Besides expressing the main theme of the Biennale in sometimes unexpected ways, they have in common an absolutely experimental and interdisciplinary approach to the practice of sculpture. The itinerary of the exhibition thus includes more traditional interventions such as the commemorative stone for the quarrymen who have lost their lives in the quarries, by the very young **Giorgio Andreotta Calò**, who has personally extracted a block of marble from a quarry without the help of machinery. There are also more conceptual works like that of **Cai Guo-Qiang**, who is bringing back to Carrara something that originated here, in his video-installation of thousands of students of the Peking Academy in the act of drawing Michelangelo's David.

There are also performances like the one conceived by Sam Durant, who gets actors directed by Gianmarco Montesano to perform the play II Primo Maggio (The First of May) by Pietro Gori. These alternate with exercises in memory such as the series of family photos of the family of the Kazakhstan couple Yerbossyn Meldibekov and Nurbossyn Oris, which shows how the urban landscape and the monuments of their country, crucial historical/cultural reference points, have changed over the last few decades since the collapse of the USSR. There are also homages to the local anarchist tradition, like the sound installation of Deimantas Narkevicius, which broadcasts the anarchical song Addio mio bel Carrara (Farewell, my lovely Carrara), sung by elderly exresistance fighters; and monuments to the everyday, such as the operation by Gillian Wearing, which photographs groups of local inhabitants on a marble pedestal. Finally, there are apparently sacrilegious operations such as the one by Maurizio Cattelan, who has announced that for the period of the Biennale he wants to substitute the historical monument to Mazzini in the central square of Carrara with a monument to Bettino Craxi.

Parallel to the exhibition itinerary proper, the XIVth International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara this year proposes an intense programme of fringe events, with conferences, performance cycles and workshops which will add lustre to the main event throughout the opening period.

The fourteenth International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara is organised by the Council of Carrara, the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio of Carrara and the Cassa di Risparmio of Carrara, with the support of Regione Toscana and Provincia di Massa Carrara and in collaboration with the Fine Arts Academy of Carrara, the Agency for Tourism Promotion of Massa Carrara, the Internazionale Marmi e Macchine Carrara Spa, and the Friends of the Fine Arts Academy of Carrara association.

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ARTISTS

Carl Andre

(Quincy, U.S.A, 1935; lives in New York)

Giorgio Andreotta Calò

(Venice, Italy, 1979; lives in Venice and Amsterdam)

Huma Bhabha (Karachi, Pakistan, 1962; lives in New York)

Rossella Biscotti

(Molfetta, Italy, 1978; lives in Amsterdam)

Monica Bonvicini

(Venice, Italy, 1965; lives in Berlin)

Carlos Bunga

(Oporto, Portugal, 1976; lives in Barcelona)

Cai Guo-Qiang

(Quanzhou City, Fujian, China, 1957; lives in New York)

Valentin Carron

(Martigny, Switzerland, 1977; lives in Geneva)

Maurizio Cattelan

(Padua, Italy, 1960; lives in New York)

Marcelo Cidade

(San Paolo, Brazil, 1979; lives in San Paolo)

Nemanja Cvijanović

(Rijeka, Croatia, 1972; lives in Rijeka and Venice)

Sam Durant

(Seattle, USA, 1961; lives in Los Angeles)

Urs Fischer

(Zurich, 1973, lives in Zurich)

Yona Friedman

(Budapest, Hungary, 1923; lives in Paris)

Cyprien Gaillard

(Paris, France, 1980; lives in Berlin)

Antony Gormley

(London, England, 1950; lives in London)

Thomas Houseago

(Leeds, England, 1972; lives in Los Angeles)

Daniel Knorr

(Bucharest, Romania, 1968; lives in Berlin)

Terence Koh

(Peking, China, 1977; lives in New York)

Liu Jianhua

(Ji'an, China, 1962; lives in Shanghai)

Paul McCarthy

(Salt Lake City, USA, 1945; lives in Los Angeles)

Yerbossyn Meldibekov and Nurbossyn Oris

(Tulkubas, Kazakhstan, 1964; Schumkent, Kazakhstan, 1971; live in Alma Ata)

Ohad Meromi

(Mizra Kibbutz, Israel, 1967; lives in New York)

Gustav Metzger

(Nuremberg, Germany, 1926; lives in London)

Deimantas Narkevicius

(Utena, Lithuania, 1964; lives in Vilnius)

Kristina Norman

(Tallin, Estonia, 1979; lives in Tallin)

Damián Ortega

(Mexico City, 1967; lives in Berlin)

Santiago Sierra

(Madrid, Spain, 1966; lives in Madrid)

Rirkrit Tiravanija

(Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1961; lives in Chiang Mai)

Kevin van Braak

(Warnseveld, Holland, 1975; lives in Amsterdam)

Yelena Vorobyeva e Viktor Vorobyev

(Nebit-Dag, Kazakhstan, 1959; Pavlodar, Kazakhstan, 1959, live in Alma Ata)

Gillian Wearing

(Birmingham, England, 1963; lives in London)

Artur Żmijewski

(Warsaw, Poland, 1966; lives in Warsaw)

HISTORICAL PART

Libero Andreotti (Pescia, 1875 – Florence, 1933)

Aldo Buttini

(Monti di Licciana, 1898 - Carrara, 1952)

Leonardo Bistolfi

(Casale Monferrato, 1859 - 3 Sept 1933)

Arturo Dazzi

(Carrara 1881 – Pisa, 1966)

Lucio Fontana

(Rosario, 1899 - 7 Sept 1968)

Arturo Martini

(Treviso, 1889 – Milan, 1947)

Fausto Melotti

(Rovereto, Trento, 1901 - Milan 1986)

Dymitr Szwarc

Adolfo Wildt

(Milan, 1868 - Milan, 1931)

FABIO CAVALLUCCI

Fabio Cavallucci (born in Santa Sofia di Romagna in 1961) directed the "Vero Stopponi" Borough Gallery of Contemporary Art of Santa Sofia from 1990 to 1997, contributing to the creation of an open-air sculpture park to various editions of the Campigna Award.

He taught from 1995 to 2005 at the Department of Visual Arts of the University of Bologna, as assistant in the course of Phenomenology of Styles held by Prof. Renato Barilli.

From 1996 to 2000 he conceived and curated the first three editions of Tuscia Electa. Arte Contemporanea nel Chianti (Contemporary Art in Chianti), inviting international artists like Mario Merz, Joseph Kosuth, Christian Boltansky, Bill Viola, Jannis Kounellis, Karel Appel, Arnaldo Pomodoro, Michelangelo Pistoletto and others to create environmental interventions in the churches, castles, and squares of the Florence/Siena area.

In 2001, with Pier Luigi Tazzi, he curated the specific project *refreshing_* for the Venice Biennale, with the artists Cai Guo-Qiang, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Olafur Eliasson, Tobias Rehberger and Massimo Bartolini.

From 2001 to 2008 he directed the Civic Gallery of Contemporary Art of Trento, where he curated exhibitions and special projects by artists such as Cai Guo-Qiang, Katarzyna Kozyra, Maurizio Cattelan, Santiago Sierra, Aernout Mik, Gillian Wearing. He set up the International Performance Award, whose jury members have included international performers like Marina Abramovic, Valie Export, Jimmie Durham.

He was the coordinator of Manifesta 7 in Trentino Alto Adige, and since 2006

he has sat on the board of the Manifesta International Foundation.

In 2009 he curated the opening of the Alt –Contemporary Art exhibition area in Bergamo.

He has written essays and articles for numerous catalogues and magazines such as "Rivista di Estetica", "Arte", "New York Arts", "Flash Art". From 2002 to 2008 he directed "Work. Art in progress", the magazine of the Civic Gallery of Contemporary Art in Trento.

BIENNALE EDUCATIONAL: CONTEMPORARY ART ENTERS THE SCHOOLS

Over 2000 schoolchildren have already booked; over 100 laboratories for kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, have been set up. This, two months' away from the Biennale opening date, is *Biennale Educational*, the innovative programme of education in contemporary art promoted and organised by the XIVth International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara. The initiative, which started at the end of March and will last well into next autumn, takes contemporary art into the schools, involving the whole territory of the Borough of Carrara, even the furthest outskirts.

The educational cycle is at the heart of a carefully-planned network of informational strategies. Its originality lies in the fact that the pupils do not learn an expressive technique, but are helped to understand some conceptual bases of current art. The activities, for which simple materials like paper and clay, old postcard and digital images are used, take their cue from the main theme of the exhibition, the monument in tradition and modernity, and from the works of the some of the guest artists. Following their work, young folk can understand how the language of art often provides an answer to current problems. For example, through the study of Santiago Sierra's *No Global Tour*, the students address the problems of globalisation. Just as the artist shows places which have lost their unique identity, so the students make a tour of the places in which they have lived in search of traces of a similar type of standardisation. Or, experiencing some of the fireworks pieces by Cai Guo-Qiang, the famous *Gunpowder drawings*, they learn the role of chance and improvisation in contemporary aesthetics.

All the proposals of Biennale Educational have been conceived bearing in

mind the different learning needs of the students in relation to their age-group. This is why the programme is divided into 4 main sections, which are in turn divided into a range of varying activities according to which class the schoolchildren are attending; thus, no fewer than 21 specific laboratories are offered. The first section is *Start*, which groups together four learning plans for the smallest children, and in which the element of play is foremost; then we move on to the manual activities of *Small*, which is divided into 6 different projects for primary schoolchildren. The programme continues with the historical and conceptual reflection of *Medium*, aimed at lower secondary school level; it concludes with the 5 projects of *Large*, the programme for young students of the upper secondary school, where the interaction is more mature and aware.

Great satisfaction has been expressed for the project by the organisers and teachers. Teachers of subjects which are apparently unconnected with the language of art, such as physics and geography, have also enthusiastically adhered to the project. This demonstrates how, thanks to its complexity and interdisciplinary nature, contemporary art can be experienced as a opportunity to approach the world which surrounds us and the most topical themes. With this project, the **International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara** thus sets out to be much more than a big event for attracting thousands of visitors in the summer season. Alone of its kind, it intends to offer an opportunity for the public at large, particularly young folk, to approach contemporary art.

Biennale Educational will continue during the exhibition opening period with guided tours for groups of adults and children, and creative and playful laboratories.

Biennale Educational is an initiative organised by the borough of Carrara thanks to the support of UniCoop Tirreno, the Chamber of Commerce of

the Province of Massa and Carrara, the eduMusei Project of the Tuscan Region. The project is part of a wider plan which was already established by the main territorial authorities concerned last October: to make the summer event not only a "must" for visitors, but also and above all a permanent, irreplaceable reference point for the cultural and economic growth of the town.

PARALLEL EVENTS

Sunday 28th February was the final application date for the *Parallel Events* of the XIVth International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara. Applicants were asked to present ideas for complementary projects for the main exhibition, to be created absolutely independently by said applicants. Over 30 associations, public and private bodies from all over Italy, took part, but also single artists, with proposals ranging from the classic monographic exhibition to performances and spontaneous events.

The judging committee consisted of Luisa Passeggia, researcher at the Faculty of Cultural Heritage Sciences of the University of Pisa and author of the book *Carrara e il Mercato della Scultura* (*Carrara and the Sculpture Market*) for the Cassa di Risparmio Bank Foundation; Antonio Grulli, a young critic and curator who recently participated in the project *Monument to transformation* (a platform of observation and reflection on society in the last 30 years); Michele Monfroni for the sculpture laboratories; and the young Elena Marchini, as the representative of the young scene. They drew up a list of 13 winning projects, the extent of whose feasibility is now being examined, hence the list has not yet been made public.

The interest aroused by the competition only serves to confirm the importance of the XIVth International Sculpture Biennale, which is taking its place among the main events of the 2010 contemporary art scene.

A HISTORICAL NOTE. THE MONUMENT IN TOTALITARIAN AND MODERNIST CONTEXTS

The focus on the monument which characterises the whole of the XIVth edition of the International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara is introduced by an historical section which illustrates the transformations of monumental sculpture from the end of the 19th to the second half of the 20th century.

As a consequence of its extraordinary popularity at the end of the 19th century in the context of sepulchral and symbolist poetry, the monument became an emblem of the values identifying the newly-constituted states, and was then transformed into a formidable tool of propaganda and mass compliance in the dictatorial regimes.

In the exhibition, a selection of significant examples presents a complex phenomenology which reveals an historical period abounding in upheavals, and records a renewed interest in marble as a material and for its symbolic value, resulting in its being widely used in both public and private commissions.

After the masterpieces of **Leonardo Bistolfi** and **Adolfo Wildt**, protagonists of funeral and symbolist sculpture between the 19th and 20th centuries, we relive Fascist rhetoric in the plaster casts for the athletes made by the Carrara sculptor **Aldo Buttini**. **Buttini** was commissioned with many other Italian artists, and with the involvement of the main local laboratories, to make the 63 colossi offered by the Italian provinces to complete the Stadio dei Marmi (Stadium of the Marbles) in Rome. This is an integral part of the Foro Mussolini (Mussolini Forum) inaugurated in 1932 and designed by the architect Enrico Del Debbio.

Through the original film made by the Istituto Luce which documents the heroic enterprise of quarrying and transporting the largest marble monolith in

the world, which was also conceived for the vast sports complex, we can relive the typical atmosphere of that era.

It was thanks to the new impulse provided by Fascist public commissions that monumental sculpture was so successful in the nineteen-thirties and -forties. Its excellence was also due to the contribution of artists like **Arturo Martini** and **Fausto Melotti**, who were involved in the making of monuments for the new regime. These, though celebratory, always reflected the impulse towards modernist experimentation which made them famous. They often never reached the public eye because of war vicissitudes or the results of public competitions, but they can be seen in the sketches. To complete this series of examples of propaganda sculpture it will be possible, thanks to the collaboration of the PERCRO laboratory of the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa, to virtually reconstruct an exceptional document, the colossal plastic group of *Victory* cast in plaster by **Lucio Fontana** for the room of the same name in the 1936 Milan Triennale and later destroyed.

The evidence of a two-waylink between the monument and totalitarian regimes is confirmed in the collection of original examples of Soviet and Chinese social realism. Thus we see rows of Lenins, Stalins and Mao Zedongs, including the portraits made by the offical Chinese sculptor Liu Kaiqu, and the Pole Alina Szapoczinkow, who today is increasingly famous on an international level for her anti-régime works.

> LUCIO FONTANA'S LOST VITTORIA (VICTORY) RECONSTRUCTED ESPECIALLY FOR THE XIVth INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE BIENNALE OF CARRARA BY THE SANT'ANNA SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDIES OF PISA

A sculpture by Lucio Fontana, no longer existing today, has been brought back to life thanks to the XIVth International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara and the PERCRO laboratory of the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa.

Vittoria (Victory), a huge white plaster sculpture, was made by the artist for the Victory Room of the Hall of Honour of the **1936 VIth Milan Triennale**. The huge sculptural group was built in just over a month after the Italian conquests in Ethiopia and Mussolini's triumphal entry into Milan. The female figure, clearly inspired by the *Nike* of Samothrace, but of far more imposing dimensions, was accompanied by a pair of rearing horses and rested on a pedestal which bore the words of Mussolini's famous speech about the African victory.

The work was inserted into the monumental scenery created by Edoardo Persico, who had received the commission for the overall conception of the Hall, and it integrated with the photo-mosaics of the great Roman military leaders by the painter Marcello Nizzoli and the interventions of the architect Giancarlo Palanti. The space was rendered surreal by the exasperated use of white. Not only was the whole setting white, but it was lit by 144 bulbs which created a blinding white light.

Like many of the monumental interventions of that time, the complex was conceived to strike the viewer, but not to last. Fontana's group was thus destroyed after that occasion.

The PERCRO laboratory will carry out the three-dimensional reconstruction of

the digital model of the sculpture in 35 days, starting from some photographic reproductions kept in the CSAC of Parma, which are the only visual evidence available. The result will be a true digital environment which enables the viewer to live the unique experience of a visual interaction with a work which no longer exists.

PERCRO is a laboratory of the **Centre of Excellence for Information**, **Communication and Perception Engineering (CEIIP)** of the **Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa**. It has a long experience in the field of designing and creating immersive visual systems, particularly in the field of cultural heritage, but also in those of medicine and industry. In the last few years one of **PERCRO**'s activities has been to create entire virtual museums, including the Pietrasanta Virtual Museum of Sculpture.

The work of Lucio Fontana, with the monumental production of Libero Andreotti, Aldo Buttini, Leonardo Bistolfi, Arturo Dazzi, Liu Kaiqu, Arturo Martini, Fausto Melotti, Alina Szapoczinkow, Dymitr Szwarc, Adolfo Wildt and others, forms the historical core of the exhibition. The works of these authors, besides representing a significant example of 20th-century rhetorical and symbolist statuary, thus serve as an introduction to the more conceptual and experimental works of contemporary sculpture.

TECHNICAL DATA SHEET

Title: XIVth International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara

Exhibition period: 26 June - 31 October 2010

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