



FONDAZIONE
PASTIFICIO CERERE

Presents

Dentro e fuori (Inside and Out)

solo exhibition by Gianni Dessì

for the tenth anniversary of the Pastificio Cerere Foundation

curated by Marcello Smarrelli

Opening: Thursday 5 February 2015, 19.00

Public opening: 6 February – 28 March 2015

Pastificio Cerere Foundation

via degli Ausoni 7, Rome

free entry

press release

Roma, January 2015

Dentro e fuori (Inside and Out), a solo exhibition by **Gianni Dessì**, will open on **5 February 2015 at 19.00**. Curated by **Marcello Smarrelli**, the exhibition forms part of a series of events celebrating the **10th anniversary** of the **Pastificio Cerere Foundation** and the **110th anniversary of the construction** of the industrial building where it is located. **The show will remain open from 6 February to 28 March 2015.**

Ten years after its birth the Foundation pays homage to the protagonists of the cultural and creative ferment that has animated the former pasta factory since the 1970s, with a cycle of **six shows** dedicated to **Ceccobelli, Dessì, Gallo, Nunzio, Pizzi Cannella** and **Tirelli**. These six artists, known as the “Gruppo di San Lorenzo,” were the first to recognize the potentialities of the disused building and to move their studios into it. Despite being in daily contact, the artists elaborated autonomous styles, and with differing outcomes. Their work continues to contribute to the contemporary art scene, demonstrating that it is possible to be rooted in a place, or indeed a single building, and at the same time be part of a vast international artistic community.

The artists were not given any precise concept to follow in ideating their shows, but were left free to construct and present a trajectory through their longstanding and articulated production. These six shows constitute just as many ideal journeys through the artists' imaginaries, sources of inspiration and symbolic universes, intertwined with tales and recollections of the years spent in the former Pastificio, in relationship with the city, with friends, with collectors and gallerists, and with all those who have played a significant role in weaving these histories.

In this sense, the show ***Dentro e fuori*** is conceived as a heterogeneous passage with which Gianni Dessì punctuates the exhibition space, tracing connections between the single elements and extending the spectator's gaze between sculpture and painting, present and past, inside and outside.

In the first instance, there is a reflection here on the meaning of one's own research. Indeed, the show opens with *Vista* (*View*, 2012), in which a multitude of small signs, obtained by rubbing the charcoal against the ridges of the paper, traces the shapes of the works realized by the artist in the past. Dessì himself defines it "my scrapheap, a place where the works have been deposited over time. And the frames evidence their similarity with window casings. Ultimately, it is a view onto what I have produced throughout the years, the drawing of my oeuvre." Facing the large charcoal drawing, a map, available to the visitors, presents the works evoked in detail. *Vista*: understood not only as a room or interior view, but also as the sensory capacity to pick out vibrant shapes from the porosity of a rough surface. An attention to the past that maintains a steady gaze on the present; a reflection that does not exhaust itself in an anthological approach but evolves into a metalinguistic one. Drawing, the artistic language par excellence, becomes code for the representation of the artist's own language.

The invitation to look inside is also present in *Lucciola* (*Firefly*, 2012), a work centered on the relationship between matter and immateriality: two ceramic hands intertwine, holding tight but leaving a gap between them, so that a small intermittent light emerges from the *inside*. The sculpture was born as a homage to Pasolini, in reference to an article in which the writer bitterly and metaphorically decreed the disappearance of the fireflies ("Articolo delle lucciole," 1975). This is the interpretation that Dessì gives to it, almost as if to suggest the possibility of harboring some hope for the future, of remembering that "in the end, all artists do is try to possess these fireflies."

The presence of a double level, the superimposition of techniques and materials, is a constant in the artist's works and is visible in the show's very installation: in *Vox* (2014), the volume of matter is dematerialized by the pictorial element that – flat and two-dimensional – visibly opens a door to the inside. It is precisely this sculpture that depicts the face of Bruno Ceccobelli, the friend and colleague who shared the Pastificio Cerere experience with him and whose studio long occupied the Pastificio's current exhibition space. Once again, a reference and a suggestion linked to the history of a place, which testifies to Dessì's interest in discovering connections between the spatial and sensorial dimensions and in constructing a dialogue between painting and sculpture, history and lived experience. *Vox* responds to the alternation between inside and outside, and, in creating a short-circuit between auditory and visual sensation, renders *visible* the voice that emerges from the mouth of the sculpture. This latter enters into dialogue with the work that gives the show its title, *Dentro e fuori* (2014): a large fibreglass mounted directly onto the wall and surrounded by the color that contains it, almost a self-portrait of the artist.

Biography

Gianni Dessì was born in 1955 in Rome, where he continues to live and work. He studied at Rome's Academy of Fine Arts, graduating in 1976 with a degree in scenography, supervised by Toti Scialoja. His earliest experiences were in the field of experimental theatre, and from 1975 to 1977 he collaborated with the theatre group "La Gaia Scienza." His first exhibition took place in 1978, a group show at the Ugo Ferranti Gallery in Rome, together with Bruno Ceccobelli, Giuseppe Gallo, Angelo Segneri and Francesca Woodman. The following year Ugo Ferranti presented Dessì's first solo show at the Arte Fiera in Bologna, followed by a show in his gallery in Rome in 1980 and later at Swart in Amsterdam and Yvon Lambert in Paris. During this same period, Dessì moved his studio to Via degli Ausoni, inside the former Pastificio Cerere, in the Roman neighborhood of San Lorenzo. It is here that the *Ateliers* show curated by Achille Bonito Oliva was held in 1984, on the occasion of which Domenico Bianchi, Bruno Ceccobelli, Giuseppe Gallo, Nunzio, Pizzi Cannella, Marco Tirelli and Dessì opened their studios to the public. His exhibition participation intensified in this period in both Europe and the United States, through numerous solo shows (in Amsterdam, Rome, Berlin, Milan, New York, Basel, Los Angeles) and group shows (Ravenna, Rome, Sao Paulo, Paris, New York, Nice, Bologna, London). He also participated in the Venice Biennale in 1984 and 1986, and in the Rome Quadriennale in 1986 and 1996. Throughout the 1990s his activity continued to grow: in 1991 he made his first *Camera picta* for Edicola Notte (Rome); in 1995 the Galleria Civica di Arte Contemporanea in Trento dedicated him a vast retrospective curated by Danilo Eccher; and his solo exhibitions were held at the Alessandro Bagnai gallery in Siena (1990, 1995, 2000), the Volker Diehl gallery in Berlin (1991), Gian Ferrari in Milan (1992), Otto in Bologna (1996), and the cultural association "Volume!" in Rome (1999). His collective shows in these years spanned across Vienna (1991), Toulouse (1992) and Nagoya (1997). In the last fifteen years, Dessì has also held solo shows at the Galerie di Meo in Paris (1999, 2005), the Galleria Ronchini in Terni and the Galerie Triebold in Rheinfelden (2000), the Galleria dello Scudo in Verona (2001, 2009), the Italian Institute of Culture in Edinburgh (2002), the Galleria dell'Oca in Rome (2003), the Otto Gallery in Bologna (2005), the Galleria Salvatore+Caroline Ala in Milan (2006), the Galleria Alessandro Bagnai in Florence (2008, 2014), the courtyard of Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza in Rome and the Musée d'Art Moderne de Saint-Étienne Métropole (2011), the Palazzo Binelli in Carrara and the Spazio Borgogno in Milan (2012), and a double solo show with Nunzio at the Biederman Museum (2014). His numerous group shows in recent years include two important exhibitions devoted to the former Pastificio Cerere in San Lorenzo, the first held in 2006 at the French Academy in Rome, curated by Graziella Lonardi Buontempo, and the second in 2009 at the MART (Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto), curated by Daniela Lancioni. In addition, throughout these years Dessì has maintained contact with the world of theatre: in 2002 he designed the sets for a production of Richard Wagner's *Parsifal*, directed by Peter Stein and conducted by Claudio Abbado at the Salzburg Festival; and in 2004 the sets for the Roman production of Petracchi's *Cordovano*, conducted by Marcello Panni and directed by Stefano Vizioli. In 2006 he collaborated on the opera *Il cielo sulla terra* with Stefano Scodanibbio and Giorgio Agamben, working on the libretto as well as designing the sets and directing; the opera was performed in Stuttgart and Mexico City. In 2008 he designed the sets for Bela Bartók's opera *Il castello del duca Barbablu*, staged at the Teatro della Scala in Milan under the direction of Peter Stein.

PROGRAM

- **Gianni Dessì:** 5 February – 28 March 2015
- **Giuseppe Gallo:** April – May 2015
- **Bruno Ceccobelli:** June – July 2015
- **Nunzio:** October – November 2015
- **Marco Tirelli:** December 2015 – January 2016
- **Pizzi Cannella:** February – March 2016

INFORMATION

Pastificio Cerere Foundation

via degli Ausoni 7, Rome

OPENING TIMES

Monday – Friday 15.00-19.00, Saturday 16.00-20.00

FREE ENTRY

CONTACTS

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