

GIOVANNI OZZOLA

Settecento

Opening: Saturday 12 February, 2011, via del Castello 11, 5pm-12 midnight

Until First of May 2011, Tuesday-Saturday, 2-7pm

The new solo exhibition conceived by Giovanni Ozzola for the Galleria Continua is entitled *Settecento*.

With this title the artist gives us a suggestion remarking the idea of a world conceived as will, as a way to achieve consciousness: self-awareness of who we are, of our history, of our perception.

Ozzola's works come into being in the moment in which reality corresponds perfectly with the mental image and thought. The fleeting moment in which the artist realizes that memory once again becomes present, when the inner world finds a full correspondence with what is external. It is in that precise moment that consciousness becomes knowledge and personal vision representation. *I believe that we arrive at the "moment", at that type of perception, comments Ozzola, only by having a thought, an attuned sensibility, creating and putting oneself in the situation, being receptive and willing... sometimes, situations manifest themselves and play a single note, like big tuning forks. A note that is no longer an exclusive part of an individual history, but which becomes representative of a shared path: this, for me, is art. As an artist, I consider myself a "way" of seeing the world, of participating in this flowing time, offering my vision according to a perspective which I hope may be universal.*

Ozzola's work is punctuated and traversed by light. The light that accompanies the passing of our days. In his photographs, as in the videos, light acquires substance and manifests itself as an event; as a representation of the grandeur of simple events; as passing time.

In the video installation created by Ozzola for this exhibition, light unites everything and, as matter, represents the passage and the manifestation. The framing is narrowed onto a distant horizon. The artist's gaze is directed towards a view that only appears in the moment in which the flashes of lightning split the sky, suddenly showing the forms and volumes of the clouds. The installation is also made up of another element – a block of rough-hewn marble. It too is matter shaped by light, that of the projector. The elements interlock once again. Ozzola introduces into the installation a real physical element, stone, opening up a series of reflections on the medium and on the language of art. The stone immediately brings to mind the early cave carvings in which primordial habits and customs are recounted in the etched rock. *Here, stresses Ozzola, is where myth in an iconic sense first began, and where an early behavioural code expressing securities and fears started to emerge.* This line of thought is developed by Elena Forin, who, in an exchange of letters with the artist, writes: *"Marble is also a symbolic element because its form evokes that of the mountain from which it was extracted. What's more, marble is a pure pictorial instrument, not only because it has been the support of so much sculpture (and thus carries with it the trace of history), but also because the video projected onto it further increases its potential in this respect. Marble, in fact, reflects and intensifies the pure value of luminosity and colour, which end up having the same body as many other of your works in which*

unusually tangible and tactile qualities are found."

Settecento also features a new body of works that stem from a photographic nature. Here too different elements combine and re-form in an image that acquires new body on the natural support from which it is composed. An observation made by Pier Luigi Tazzi helps to visualize this occurrence in concrete terms: "Each image emerges from a background. The background is not image, but rather the substance giving rise to the image." For this reason, in these new works all the materials that make up the work contribute to the constitution of the image; the background and the emulsion touch, creating a vision. As regards the concept of transformation, of the change of form and substance that generates the birth of the work, Ozzola continues: *The background is the humoral fluid – the amniotic liquid of the image. The image is the vision, the realization.*

Giovanni Ozzola was born in Florence in 1982. He divides his time between Prato and Paris. After several years in London, he returned to Italy in 2001, and began his career as an artist. In the same year he contributed to the exhibition *Happiness. A Survival Guide for Art and Life*, curated by David Elliott and Pier Luigi Tazzi, at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo. Since then, he has focused on light as material for the formulation of his artistic vision. He considers his central concern to be an interest in three-dimensional space and light, and explores the mental image and the essence of the subject. Ozzola has shown his work widely both in Italy and abroad, in a range of exhibition spaces, including: MART, Rovereto; Chelsea Art Museum, New York; Galleria Continua, San Gimignano/Le Moulin; Palazzo delle Papesse, Siena; MAN Museo d'Arte, Nuoro; Museo Pecci, Prato; Mori Museum, Tokyo; Galleria Civica di Arte Contemporanea, Trento; Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan; Centre d'Art Bastille, Grenoble, France; Schunck-Glaspaleis, Herleen, Holland; Künstlerhaus Palais Thurn und Taxis, Bregenz, Austria; GC.AC, Monfalcone; ViaFarini DOCVA, Milan. In 2010 Ozzola won the Talent Prize '10, and participated in a number of major group shows, including: *Linguaggi e Sperimentazioni. Giovani artisti in una collezione contemporanea*, curated by Giorgio Verzotti, at the MART, Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto; *8 minuti dal sole, 1 minuto dalla luna*, curated by Alessandro Romanini, at LU.C.C.A, Lucca; *Niente da vedere tutto da vivere*, curated by Lorenzo Bruni, in the fringe events section of the 14th International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara, Istituto del Marmo Pietro Tacca, Carrara; *China Purple, No Soul For Sale*, at ViaFarini – Tate Modern – Turbine Hall Bridge, London; *Il giardino segreto. Opere d'arte del secondo Novecento nelle collezioni private pugliesi*, in the former Convent of Santa Scolastica, Bari. In 2008, one of his works, *Omnia Munda Mundis*, entered the prestigious permanent collection of the Castello di Ama per l'Arte Contemporanea. In 2010 he also had a solo exhibition, entitled *On the Edge*, at the Elgiz Museum in Istanbul, curated by Elena Forin. In 2011 he is due to show in: *Talenti Emergenti, 2011*, CCC Strozzi, Florence; *Naufrage*, curated by Ludovico Pratesi, Centro Arti Visive Pescheria, Pesaro; *Ghaib: Aesthetics of the Disappearance*, Sharjah Maraya Art Center, Dubai.

For further information about the exhibition and for photographs:

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