

Matèria

Mario Cresci
Combinazioni provvisorie
23.06.2020 -
31.10.2020

Matèria is pleased to present Mario Cresci's first solo show at the gallery titled Combinazioni Provvisorie. The exhibition is accompanied by a critical essay by Mauro Zanchi and presents two key works by the artist: Analogie e Memoria (1980) and Cronistorie (1970).

In Analogie e Memoria - a body of work produced in Matera between the late seventies and eighties - Mario Cresci merges signs, images, text, drawings, notes, fragments of icons kept in archives and drawers; projects, collages, posters, extracts of printed texts and images, borrowed photographs. A diary of an iconic journey, in which all the elements are composed of each other, much like a dummy for a large book. The photocopies - 56 of which are housed in the first room of the gallery - become "works" in the sense of art as an idea, to be understood as propositions that fulfils a cognitive task. Cresci makes use of the most anonymous of our communication means: in this case replacing the use of the camera with a photocopier, where he lays out his whole world; one defined by visible reality and cognitive explorations, in an attempt to avoid the formalistic implications tied to the canons of classical photography.

In Cronistorie - a forty five minute 16mm film, reassembled in a 10' video piece - Mario Cresci constructs a story and undergoes an investigation on popular culture in the southern Italian region of Basilicata. Cresci's depiction is both realistic and visionary, moving between tradition and avant-garde, between work of art and mysterious projection. Images move in densely anthropological scenarios, within the mystery of peasant rituals, animal sacrifices, religious processions, within the shaded areas of the collective rural unconscious. The narrative draws on an inexhaustible source of the world's latent images, shining a light on signs, paths, footprints and oneiric maps in dialogue on a formal and perceptive level.

Cronistorie is set in the seventies - within a context of blending experiences, contamination of ideas and vision, distant and often anarchic viewpoints - and can be viewed as an attempt to understand the reasons for my detachment from the norms of seeing and feeling that animated the reality of those years. Art was my only way to survive and to keep away from all that I viewed and felt as inhumane, wrong and false. The video in its essence is also this: a concentration of uneasiness that finds in a particular place like Tricarico a similarity to what I later observed in Macondo from 'One Hundred Years of Solitude'.

(Mario Cresci)

From the sixties onwards Mario Cresci is the Italian artist whose work marks the development of the photographic medium's innovative and experimental language. Cresci's continuous experimentation gives him a preeminent position among Italian photographers who give a "meaning" to photography: a medium able to constantly change our connection to reality, evoking an "illusory" form of the natural.

His complex work is grounded in multidisciplinary studies started in Venice in 1963 and, after moving to Rome in '69, influenced by the encounter with the main protagonists of the Arte Povera, in particular Pino Pascali, Eliseo Mattiacci, Yannis Kounellis and Alighiero Boetti.

In 1969 he designs and produces the first photographic Environnement in Europe - a body of work dealing with the consumerism of the period - at Gallery Il Diaframma in Milan, by exhibiting one thousand transparent cylinders each containing a transparent photograph.

In 1970 he participates in the Venice Biennale, to which he is invited again in 1978, 1993 and 1995.

In the seventies he settles in Matera - designated as the European Capital of Culture for 2019 - where he combines the study of photographic language and the culture of the project through a distinct focus on cultural anthropology; producing works and furthering events for the development of the photographic medium in Italy. Amongst these projects is the publication of Matera, images and documents (1975), a book that can be defined as the first photographic oeuvre on the urban anthropological culture of southern Italy.

In the 1980s he contributes to the reevaluation of the landscape and its meaning, a subject placed in the spotlight by Luigi Ghirri's Viaggio in Italia, exhibited at the Provincial Pinacoteca di Bari in 1984.

Since 1974 a selection of his works, along with those by Luigi Ghirri, are part of the New York MoMA collection.

His works are housed in numerous public collections, institutes and research centers such as MAXXI - Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XX secolo in Rome, GAMeC - Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Bergamo, Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna, ICG - Istituto Centrale per la Grafica in Rome, Museo d'Arte Medioevale e Moderna della Basilicata in Matera, MAGA - Museo d'Arte in Gallarate, GAM - Galleria Civica d'Arte Contemporanea in Turin, CSAC - Centro Studi e Archivio della Comunicazione in Parma, MARCA - Museo delle Arti in Catanzaro and CRAF - Centro Ricerca e Archiviazione della Fotografia in Spilimbergo.

In 2020 he publishes the book Segni migranti. Storia di grafica e fotografia with PostCart, a compendium of his graphic and photographic research. He teaches at ISIA University in Urbino and at Foundation FMAV in Modena. He lives and works in Bergamo.

Based in the neighbourhood of San Lorenzo in Rome, Matèria opened its doors to the public in 2015. The gallery proposes an exhibition programme that touches upon all aspects of Contemporary Art, with a particular focus on the role and use of the photographic medium. Since its founding, Matèria's purpose has been the furthering and development of the work of its selected group of Artists.

The gallery programme features four exhibitions per calendar year, conceived and produced directly with its artists and often in dialogue with the space through a site specific approach. Matèria's gallery shows strive to further the research and experimentation aspects of artistic practice, with the results of this approach often showcased in a growing list of Italian and international art fairs.

Matèria represents the work of Fabio Barile, Giulia Marchi, Mario Cresci, Xiaoyi Chen, Giuseppe De Mattia, Marta Mancini and Stefano Canto.

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From 23.06.2020 to 31.10.2020

Matèria, Via Tiburtina 149, Roma

materiagallery.com

Matèria

Hours

From Tuesday to Saturday
from 11 am to 7 pm

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