

Matèria

Esposizione di frutta e verdura

Una mostra personale di
Giuseppe De Mattia

10.23.2019 –
01.21.2020

On October 22nd, Matèria is pleased to unveil a new body of work by represented artist Giuseppe De Mattia, *Esposizione di Frutta e Verdura*, a site-specific project curated by Vasco Forconi.

On the occasion of his second solo show in the gallery spaces, Giuseppe De Mattia continues his ironic investigation into the ways of producing, selling and consuming works of art. The tricks and devices of the sale - observable both in flea markets and in gallery offices - are subjected to an analytical look, becoming tools to trace and develop a self-reflective narrative that exposes the artist, who is caught red handed, in the act of his eternal bargaining efforts with gallery owners, critics and potential collectors.

The fruit and vegetable shop - a great place of fascination for De Mattia since his early childhood - becomes a repertoire of forms and practices that the artist selects, isolates and translates into a large scale environmental installation. Such fascination is above all aesthetic: the fruit shop reveals itself to be a place characterised by a precise vocabulary of scents, forms, colours and compositions; where the artisanal taste of showcasing a product - through often elementary and ingenious *display* methods - becomes functional to the overall economic success.

When the above mentioned vocabulary is transferred into the gallery, De Mattia stages a paradoxical «beauty contest» between objects borrowed from the real market and his own produced works, inviting the public to briefly share his fascinated gaze for a world often relegated to our peripheral view. The overlap between the fruit store and the art gallery, two places where commercial success is closely related to the ability of exhibiting a commodity object, allows De Mattia to articulate an awareness of the structural conditions of his *profession* as an artist. It is neither an institutional critique, nor an attempt to expose the paradoxical mechanisms of the production of value, but rather the desire to declare what the rules of the game are, setting in (economic) reality the privileged gaze that the artist has on it.

When entering the gallery, the viewer is immersed in an empty environment dominated by a striking green hue and accompanied by the presence of a delicate plant based scent. Reproducing the artist's irregular handwriting, the neon sign serves as an attractive commercial ploy, alluding to the temporary and playful transformation of Matèria into a retail space. At the same time, the autographic quality of neon inscribes the whole project within a specific artistic visual tradition, declaring its precise authorship from the outset. The profoundly dematerialized and synaesthetic nature of this first intervention anticipates the central core of the installation, which is encountered by the viewer in the second gallery room. In this space, an imposing metal structure displays a composition of numerous crates containing seasonal fruits and vegetables, arranged by the artist to follow a precise chromatic scheme.

The structure, whose functionality is made paradoxical by its oversized height, becomes somewhat of a totem-sculpture that pays homage to the performative act of the sale and to the characteristic talent showcased in the display of products in fruit and vegetable shops. Only a closer look reveals the numerous liquid tint-coloured ceramic sculptures placed within wooden fruit crates; a feature that recalls the graphic production of the artist and alludes also to a specific kitsch feel, typical of the tradition associated with ornamental ceramics. The search for a constant tension between the work of art and reality is furthermore exemplified in the collaboration with the numerous artisans that De Mattia involves in the project, and for whom the artist holds a profound sense of fascination.

The taste for all that can be attributed to the fruit of artisan ingenuity is inscribed within the “poetics of poor objects” that has guided Giuseppe De Mattia's research and artistic practice for many years. By transforming the gallery into a retail space, the artist moreover responds to a need for popular dissemination of his work, resorting to a tradition of playing with

artist multiples as the main strategy for his operation, an approach and practice which he identifies in the research of Bruno Munari and Enzo Mari. The authorial gesture resurfaces several times throughout the exhibition, specifically in the form of the *superstitious orange*: a fragmentary self-portrait of the artist, who, by mimicking the horns with his hand, enables a propitiatory sale gesture, transforming his own graphic sign into a publicity stunt imbued in southern superstition.

The exhibition is organised in collaboration with Museo Carlo Zauli of Faenza. An anticipation of the project was presented in the context of *La Quarta Notte di Quietè. Scarti*, curated by Christian Caliandro and part of the 2019 Art Verona collateral programme.

Giuseppe De Mattia (1980) is an artist who employs a dialogue of mediums to investigate the relationship between memory and contemporaneity. Photography, video, sound, drawing and painting can all be found and often blend within his work.

Alongside his personal practice, De Mattia collaborates with the collective Coclite/De Mattia and Casa a Mare (with Luca Coclite and Claudio Musso). He currently works with the Bologna film library and Home Movies - The national family film archive.

He is represented by Matèria in Rome, Maurizio Corraini in Mantova and Nowhere Gallery in Milan. He publishes his books with Corraini Editore, Danilo Montanari and Skinnerboox.

In 2015 he founds 'Libri Tasso' an independent artist book self-publishing project.

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, Stefano Canto.

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Opening
10.22.2019 7pm
From 10.23.2019 to 1.21.2020
Matèria, Via Tiburtina 149, Roma
materialogallery.com

Matèria

Hours
From Tuesday to Saturday
from 11 am to 7 pm

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