

Matèria

Giuseppe De Mattia

Figlio di gazza

21.10.2023 -

23.12.2023

On October 21st from 6 pm, Matèria is pleased to open *Figlio di gazza*, Giuseppe De Mattia's (Bari 1980) third solo show at the gallery, curated by Vasco Forconi. The exhibition features a series of site-specific works that reflect De Mattia's recent artistic practice, as he returns to investigate the phenomenology of the artist's profession through the use of the magpie as a narrative device, inspiring the exhibition title.

While animal symbolism has appeared multiple times in his work, taking on different roles, De Mattia now undergoes a true process of identification with the (thieving) magpie. Throughout the exhibition, the magpie progressively assumes the roles of a spirit animal, interlocutor, and alter ego of the artist.

Following her instinct, the magpie steals and accumulates precious objects, then guards them in her nest, transforming it into an unintentional wunderkammer. This action, similar and specular to what artists do within their studios, is a metaphorical act of theft and accumulation, eventually resulting in the transformation of the loot into artworks. This uncontrollable impulse for theft and serial accumulation becomes an opportunity for De Mattia to reflect, with the irony that has always characterized his poetics, on both the methodologies and the structural conditions of the artist's profession.

The exhibition presents itself as a sensory translation of this ongoing process of research, accumulation, and transformation, of both objects and ideas; it's a material and metaphorical act of labor, essential for the artist's daily survival, in which different styles and languages are mixed, not devoid of a certain conscious anachronism.

Figlio di gazza is a body of work dedicated to the analysis of theft, citation, and appropriation in artistic practice. Giuseppe De Mattia engages in a dialogue with the magpie, which leads him to an awareness and assimilation of the clever and furtive method with which the animal, and therefore the artist himself, observe the world.

An imaginary magpie hides in the gallery space, nests among the branches, sowing traces behind small wooden, tin, and cardboard boxes while letting herself be observed. Following these clues, the audience finally encounters the magpie and is invited to approach a large-scale installation: a room in which one can peek onto from small holes in the wall. Here, you can observe a series of bas-relief votive icons bearing the image of precious objects discovered by De Mattia over the years, collected, accumulated, and then resold; a process that has allowed him to find financial support in the early years of his career. Accompanying the audience is the voice of the magpie, that with an almost fairytale tone, recounts her attraction to all that shines, her thieving nature, in an imaginary dialogue with the artist that results in a reflection on the concept of value, originality and reproduction; culminating in the serene acceptance of the artist as a *thief*.

Dialect, popular culture, love for craftsmanship and collecting, the revelation of the tricks of the trade are some of the different elements that contribute to the creation of a deeply autobiographical narrative. However, as Vasco Forconi writes in the text accompanying the exhibition, “this narrative is subtly revealed to be broader and generational, another chapter in the ongoing tragicomic saga of a mid-career artist.”

* In conjunction with the exhibition, Luca Bertolo will exhibit a new work titled *Santa Lucia* inside the gallery’s street facing vitrine. This intervention, born from an invitation by Giuseppe De Mattia, is created in collaboration with SpazioA and is accompanied by a critical text by Enrico Camprini.

Giuseppe De Mattia (Bari, 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. As a keen observer of the contemporary artistic landscape, De Mattia’s work often touches upon structural issues tied to the economy of the arts, articulated through a dialogue between irony, satire and poignant critique.

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

Giuseppe De Mattia currently lives and works between Bologna and Noha (Le).

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. 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, Karen Knorr, Mario Cresci, Xiaoyi Chen, Giuseppe De Mattia, Sunil Gupta, Marta Mancini, Joachim Lenz, Stefano Canto, Bekhbaatar Enkhtur and Eduardo Fonseca e Silva & Francisca Valador.

Giuseppe De Mattia
Figlio di gazza

21 October 2023 – 23 December 2023

Matèria | Via dei Latini, 27 - Roma

materiagallery.com

Matèria

Hours
From Tuesday to Saturday
from 11 am to 7 pm

Contact
contact@materiagallery.com

Press enquiries
UC studio, press@ucstudio.it
Roberta Pucci
roberta@ucstudio.it
mob: +39 340 817 4090
Chiara Ciucci Giuliani
chiara@ucstudio.it
mob: +39 392 917 3661