

Matèria Stefano Canto

Sogno di Pietra

28.02.2026 -
30.04.2026

Matèria is pleased to present Sogno di Pietra, Stefano Canto's fourth solo exhibition with the gallery. The exhibition represents the concluding chapter of a cycle structured in three acts, dedicated to the theme of the archaeology of the ephemeral - a conceptual axis that has informed the previous exhibitions *Sotto l'influenza del Fiume. Sedimento* (2018) and *Carie* (2021). In continuity with this trajectory, Sogno di Pietra will be accompanied by a publication - set to be released during the exhibition - thus renewing the collaboration with book designer Fiorenza Pinna.

With Sogno di Pietra, Canto transforms the gallery into a quarry deposit: an intermediate space in which matter is yet to acquire a defined function, where everything remains possible and new trajectories become available. In this suspended condition, far removed from the aesthetic canon of consumption, matter reveals itself in its most authentic state - raw and alive.

Stefano Canto's sculptures are works in flux, in which what is staged is a process based, cyclical dimension in constant transformation. Terms such as lithification, deposition, and erosion - borrowed from geological vocabulary - aptly describe the artist's approach to sculptural practice. Materials of differing nature and consistency are brought into relation through continuous exchange, generating dynamics of mutual transformation.

Polychrome sculptures composed of frozen water, oxides, and pigments depict imaginary figures resting atop towers of stacked materials, waiting to become architecture: suspended visions that emerge from the artist's autobiographical imagination. As these ice busts rapidly melt, they soak the cement dust beneath, which reacts by solidifying into stone - a sedimentary fossil in the making, preserving the features of the face that once rested upon it. The result is a cascading morphology in which the sculpture forms from within, staining, excavating, and hardening matter layer by layer. This is a process that partly eludes the artist's control, where fullness and void, solid and ephemeral matter, artifact and natural phenomenon, ancient and contemporary coexist.

The final form takes shape as a (dream of stone) sogno di pietra: a liquid thought that materializes in the ruin of the contemporary - a relic of an eternal present.

Also on view is a selection of works on paper: visual notes produced by Canto prior to sculpting, fundamental moments of reflection and development that reveal a more intimate and instinctive phase of his creative process.

In collaboration with:  Accademia Italiana

With special thanks to: Tra casa e bottega (Roma)

Stefano Canto (Rome, 1974) lives and works in Rome. He graduated in Architecture from La Sapienza University in 2003, specializing in Garden Art and Landscape Design. His research investigates the poetics of place and the social implications of the relationship between human beings and architecture. His practice stems from observing the environment as a complex and polysemic reality, composed of elements in continuous dialogue, each carrying its own identity and symbolic value.

Through sculpture and site-specific installations, Canto works with construction materials - particularly concrete - placing them in relation to natural elements such as water, plants, and trees. The resulting interventions reflect on processes of transformation, sedimentation, and memory, activating a tension between the built and the organic, permanence and mutation.

He has exhibited at numerous institutions and international events, including La Quadriennale di Roma, the American Academy in Rome, the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, the Dakar Biennale, Museo Macro, Museo Nazionale Romano, and Museo RISO. In 2005 he received the Premio Roma, followed in 2009 by a second prize at Terna 02, presented at MAXXI - National Museum of 21st Century Arts.

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, Chen Xiaoyi, Giuseppe De Mattia, Sunil Gupta, Marta Mancini, Joachim Lenz, Francisca Valador, Stefano Canto, Bekhbaatar Enkhtur, and Maïmouna Guerresi.

Stefano Canto
Sogno di Pietra

28 February 2026 - 30 April 2026

Matèria
Via dei Latini, 27 - Roma
materialogallery.com

Matèria

Hours
From Tuesday to Saturday
from 11 am to 7 pm

Contact
contact@materialogallery.com

Press enquiries
press@materialogallery.com
Roberta Pucci
robertapucci@gmail.com
mob: +39 340 817 4090
Chiara Ciucci Giuliani
chiaracgiuliani@gmail.com
mob: +39 392 917 3661