

Giulio Paolini

FINE (THE END)

curated by Bettina Della Casa

Galleria Christian Stein
Milan, Corso Monforte 23 – Pero (Mi), via V. Monti 46

10 November 2016 – 29 April 2017

On 10 November 1966, Ms Margherita von Stein opened a new gallery at Via Teofilo Rossi 3 in Turin with a solo show by Aldo Mondino. Christian Stein was the “nom de plume” chosen by Margherita von Stein for herself and for her Gallery, which was to become a benchmark on the international scene for the Arte Povera movement.

Today – five decades and over 250 exhibitions later, the Gallery in Turin having been closed while the two venues in Milan continue their activity – Galleria Christian Stein is celebrating its anniversary with two exhibitions dedicated to Giulio Paolini in the spaces of Corso Monforte 23, in the heart of the city, and at Via Vincenzo Monti 46 in Pero, outside Milan.

Giulio Paolini (Genoa, 1940), a leading figure in Conceptual art, exhibited his work for the first time in Via Teofilo Rossi in Turin in 1967, and later, on various other occasions, at the gallery’s new address in Piazza San Carlo. Over the years, he has kept close ties with Galleria Christian Stein, now directed by Gianfranco Benedetti who, from 1971, worked with Ms Stein until she passed away in 2003.

For this exhibition the artist has chosen to present in the large spaces of Pero some of his particularly significant large-scale works dating from the 1970s to the present. The exhibition marks the most important stages in the artistic evolution of Paolini, who has personally chosen a series of historic works that converse with three hitherto unseen interventions. This “conversation” comprises six sections corresponding to six of the gallery’s rooms.

Paolini’s plaster casts titled “Mimesis” from the 1970s (1976-88) are described by the artist himself as “two identical copies, placed one opposite the other, of an antique sculpture, the intention being to capture the distance that separates them and the void that the work creates around itself, taking away from us the right to possess its impenetrable gaze”.

An example of the artist’s research in the 1990s is the work “Hic et nunc (Le Radeau de la Méduse)” (1991), which evokes, in metaphorical terms, the scene represented in the painting by Géricault “The Raft of the Medusa”, and suggests with dramatic emphasis the unstable equilibrium that presides over the accomplishment of the vision.

In this display, as is often the case with Paolini’s installations, one hears the echoes of past artists assumed as vital and irreplaceable elements of the work’s becoming: a “theatre” of timeless representations, always loyal to itself and yet renewed each and every time.

In the historic hall in Palazzo Cicogna, in Corso Monforte, Paolini presents a single large-scale installation entitled “Fine”, made specially for this occasion: a complex and elaborate work that tends to trace over the whole creative experience of the artist in a symbolic “voyage home”. It is by way of an overt reference to Jean-Antoine Watteau and his painting “L’embarquement pour Cythère” (1717) that Paolini stages a sort of large raft that hosts a variety of objects, all of which coming from the artist’s studio, works, or ordinary tools.

A text by Paolini welcomes visitors and introduces them to an interpretation of the exhibition.

Giulio Paolini (Genoa, 1940. Currently lives in Turin)

Historically connected from 1967 to the Arte Povera movement and to the context of European Conceptual art, Paolini works in the belief that the art of our time is only possible as a rethinking and a recapitulation of its history, not in the eclectic and citation-oriented direction that was affirmed in the 1980s, but in that of a subtle intellectual game woven around the very foundations of artistic practice. Whereas during a first phase Paolini focused on the analysis of the supports and instruments involved in painting (canvas, stretcher, easel, colours, squarings, linear outlines), from the 1960s onwards he devoted himself to research, bristling with past references, into some of the key concepts of artistic theory, from mimesis to the relationship between the author, the work, and the viewer.

Since his first group exhibition in 1961 and his first solo show in 1964, Giulio Paolini has held numerous exhibitions in galleries and museums across the world.

For more in-depth information about Giulio Paolini and a list of his exhibitions: www.fondazionepaolini.it.

Pero (Milan), Via Vincenzo Monti 46: Tuesday - Saturday 12 - 7 pm

For further information: T. 0039 02 38100316 info@galleriachristianstein.com

Milan, Corso Monforte 23: Tuesday - Friday 10 am - 7 pm, Saturday 10 am - 1 pm / 3 - 7 pm

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