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la Biennale di Venezia

55. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte

Padiglione Italia

vice versa

Italian Pavilion at the 55th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia

Venice (Tese delle Vergini, Arsenale)

June 1st - November 24th, 2013

Commissioner: Maddalena Ragni

Curator: Bartolomeo Pietromarchi

Artists: Francesco Arena, Massimo Bartolini, Gianfranco Baruchello,
Elisabetta Benassi, Flavio Favelli, Luigi Ghirri, Piero Golia, Francesca Grilli,
Marcello Maloberti, Fabio Mauri, Giulio Paolini, Marco Tirelli,
Luca Vitone, Sislej Xhafa.

PRESS RELEASE

The Italian Pavilion at the 55th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia presents *vice versa*, **an ideal journey through Italian art of today**, an itinerary that tells of identities, history and landscapes – real and imaginary – exploring the complexity and layers that characterize the country's artistic vicissitudes.

The Italian Pavilion, realized by the Directorate-General for the Landscape, Fine Arts, Architecture and Contemporary Art of the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities, through the Architectural and Contemporary Art Services is curated by **Bartolomeo Pietromarchi**, who describes the exhibition as, “A portrait of recent art, read as an atlas of themes and attitudes in dialogue with the historical legacy and current affairs, with both a local and international dimension. A cross-dialogue of correspondences, derivations and differences between acclaimed maestros and artists of later generations. An unusual topography, that permits a reevaluation of some basic trajectories in recent Italian art, a

retracing of forgotten paths, the healing of cultural amnesia and gives new visibility to solitary authors.”

“The creative motive and conceptual determination which support the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities intervention at the *Biennale di Venezia*, with the promotion of the Italian Pavilion – claims commissioner **Maddalena Ragni** – contribute to building a platform of comparison no longer solely on the themes of conservation, enhancement and promotion, to which the Ministry traditionally is obliged to respond, but also the new and decisive question of fruition. It offers opportunities for reflection that foster debate on contemporary art and supports current critical positions and readings, in continuity with the premises of the *International Art Exhibition*, in all its complexity.

The exhibition is divided into **seven spaces** – six rooms and a garden – that **each house the work of two artists**, who are brought together on the basis of the affinity of their respective poetics and common interests in themes, ideas and practices.

Following a concept theorized by Giorgio Agamben in *Categorie italiane. Studi di Poetica* (1996), in which he argues that in order to interpret Italian culture, it is necessary to identify a “series of polarized conjugate concepts” that are able to describe its fundamental characteristics, **the curator has chosen seven binomials**, around which he structured the project: *body/history*, *view/place*, *sound/silence*, *perspective/surface*, *familiar/strange*, *system/fragment* and *tragedy/comedy*.

The return to the centrality of theme in history, lived and returned through the filter of one’s own body and personal biography are present in the work of **Francesco Arena** and **Fabio Mauri**; the importance of the relationship between gaze and perception of the landscape, as places of memory and collective space characterize the work of **Luigi Ghirri** and **Luca Vitone**; the relationship between sound and silence, which explore of the scope of sensible excess, characterize the research of **Massimo Bartolini** and **Francesca Grilli**; while the connection between perspective and surface, illusion and artifice where the artwork remains poised between real and represented space is found in **Giulio Paolini** and **Marco Tirelli**’s works. The relationship between the collective imagination, popular culture and personal biography – summed up in the binomial *familiar/strange* – is confronted by **Flavio Favelli** and **Marcello Maloberti**; the relationship between system and fragment that introduces reflections on archives and the obsession with classification, lists and collection, is highlighted in the works of **Gianfranco Baruchello** and **Elisabetta Benassi**; finally with the relevance of classical dualism between tragedy and comedy, inserted into contemporary reality unites the work of **Piero Golia** and **Sislej Xhafa**.

In a dialogue between artist and artist, room and room, **the exhibition presents works that have mostly been created specifically for the occasion – twelve out of fourteen** – and is proposed as a platform for reflection on the characteristics and contradictions of Italian culture, returning that vital complexity to our recent art which is created out of intuitions and contradictions in which the game of *vice versa* is one of its fundamental elements, thus asserting the status of originality and international importance that it deserves.

The catalogue that accompanies the exhibition is published in both Italian and English and includes a reflection on the exhibition’s structure, signed by curator Bartolomeo Pietromarchi, and pieces dedicated to each artist, complete with technical specifications and information on their research. The publication is enriched by seven essays dedicated to

each of the thematic dialogues, written by Marco Belpoliti, Stefano Catucci, Stefano Chiodi, Andrea Cortellessa, Gabriele Guercio, Riccardo Venturi e Elena Volpato.

May 30th, 2013

More Information and Materials: www.viceversa2013.org

INFORMATION

Open to the public: June 1st – Novembre 24th, 2013

Hours: 10.00AM to 6.00PM (closed Mondays)

Place: Venice, Tese delle Vergini all' Arsenal

For more information on how to visit the 55th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia: www.labiennale.org

PRESS INFORMATION

Italian Pavilion Press Office

Maria Bonmassar | M. +39 335 49 03 11 | maria.bonmassar@gmail.com

Ludovica Solari | M. +39 335 577 17 37 | ludovicasolari@gmail.com

Italian Pavilion International Press Office:

Rhiannon Pickles | M. +31 (0) 6158 21202 | rhiannon@picklespr.com

Maria Cristina Giusti | M. +44 (0) 792 581 0607 | crisrina@picklespr.com

PABACC/MiBAC General Direction Communications

Alessandra Pivetti | M. +39 366 64 82 897 | alessandra.pivetti@beniculturali.it

Gaia Gallotta | T. +39 06 6723 48 16 | gaia.gallotta@beniculturali.it