

Galleria Continua is pleased to welcome back to its San Gimignano gallery space one of the great protagonists of the international art scene: Michelangelo Pistoletto.

The artist is presenting a series of previously unshown works constituting a new project entitled *Buco nero* (Black Hole). The works conceived for this solo exhibition represent an effective evolution of some of the key concepts on which Pistoletto's practice has been based since the start of his career in the early 1970s.

One of the characteristic materials of the artist's work, the mirror, is employed in two new wall installations. Talking of the mirror, the artist observes: "The mirror only exists if it reflects, otherwise it is nothing, it loses its function. Identifying myself in the mirror I wondered: If I am mirror how can I recognize myself... without a mirror? I had to give it a double so it could reflect and be/call itself mirror. Absurd, isn't it? Then, cutting the mirror I saw a third mirror, its firstborn, also reflecting. And one could carry on to infinity. (...) The process of acting and breaking a mirror is a way of rendering physical the action of dividing-to-multiply. Without a physical action there is no metaphysics. And also of saying something about time. Time as 'past'. Black forms remain on the broken mirror, the document of an act, an instant photo imbued with memory of a past. The mirror refers us to a creative act that is already 'past'. That black was a 'present'. The paradox is that the mirror becomes a witness both of pastness and of becoming. The mirror is the nothingness that contains everything, even that which has yet to become. In the mirror the present is possibility. There is also that which has not yet been revealed."

Silver and black mirrors in succession, circular and elliptical forms evoking the sign of infinity and the cyclical nature of time – this is the dominant theme of the works presented in the Arco dei Becci exhibition space.

Between 1965 and 1966 Michelangelo Pistoletto produced and showed, in his studio, a set of works entitled *Oggetti in Meno* (Minus Objects), realized in the contingent dimension of time and based on the principle of differences, thereby breaking the dogma of the uniformity of individual artistic style. These works are considered fundamental for the birth of *Arte Povera*, the artistic movement theorized by Germano Celant in 1967, of which Pistoletto was a key protagonist. "(...) The works I do are not intended to be constructions or fabrications of new ideas, just as they are not meant to be objects that represent me, to be imposed on or to impose myself on others. Rather they are objects through which I rid myself of something – they are not constructions but liberations – I don't regard them as plus objects but minus objects, in the sense that they carry with them a definitively externalized perceptual experience." (M. Pistoletto, *Minus Objects*). The well placed by Pistoletto in

the gallery's exhibition space is in keeping with and pursues this line of thought.

Exactly as on the threshold of a mirror painting, this succession of works that reference each other positions Michelangelo Pistoletto's artistic practice in a temporal dimension that includes past, present and future.

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