

*For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am also known.* [1 Corinthians, 13:12]

After one year of silence and retirement from the art-world, Maurizio Cattelan and his works are once again arousing questions regarding life and death in a museum exhibition; the first exhibition after his well-known and successful Guggenheim retrospective. On display at the Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw is a selection of the artist's most significant works. In them, he poses questions as to the contemporary understanding of death, sacrifice, forgiveness, the genesis of evil in humankind, national identity, and historical memory.

Cattelan's last works are a highly personal and dramatic inquiry into the meaning of suffering and anguish, which we drive from our consciousness, but which are an integral part of life from birth right up until death. Agonized figures are a kind of *memento*, which move the viewer and, in doing so, triggers an awareness of the loss of sensitivity to the human suffering ever present in the media. The realism of the sculptures calls to mind the veristic iconography of the Middle Ages and Caravaggio's paintings; the dirty feet of both the tormented woman and the hung child command us to remember that just a moment ago, they were treading the earth, walking amongst us.

In a Warsaw ravaged by the cataclysmic 20th century, Maurizio Cattelan's works take on a particular dimension; they become an artistic commentary on the Catholic *credo*... what, in fact, does love thy enemy mean? What does forgive those who trespass against us mean? Evoking the traumas of history, they deal with memory and forgetfulness, good and evil.

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