

The show, curated by Alessandro Rabottini, marks the debut of a series of works created for the occasion and it marks Gabellone's return to exhibiting in Italy after several years' absence.

Since the second half of the Nineties, Gabellone's work has attracted the attention of the international public and critics because of his original approach to the languages of photography and sculpture, and its formal and conceptual rigour. As a result, at a very young age the artist was asked to participate in the Venice Biennale (in 1997 and 2003) as well as Documenta in Kassel (2002).

In his work, Gabellone explores the relationship between sculpture and photography, between two-dimensionality and three-dimensionality, between the image and its physicality, elevating the photographic medium and the concept of sculpture to new levels of language. While in his early years the artist's work established profound ties with the legacy of Arte Povera and post-minimalist sculpture – above all in the way of conceiving of sculpture as a field of energy, transformation and temporality – more recently his work has increasingly been characterized by experimentation, not only with materials but also iconographic invention. This is exemplified by the series exploiting the language of bas-relief – and, consequently, the relationship between image, sculpture and architecture – that he created by experimenting with materials such as polyurethane foam, tobacco and aluminium powder (see the series *I Giapponesi*, 2003, and the series *Senza Titolo*, 2005).

The very idea of the image as a construction halfway between abstraction and reality is central to Gabellone's work, and this is evident if we consider one of the processes typical of his oeuvre: that of designing and building structures and objects that only exist as photographic images. This aspect of Gabellone's work calls into question photography as a form of recording reality, in favour of an idea of the photograph as a form of invention of that reality. This is one of the reasons that, in his images, prosaic and realistic elements – such as industrial and urban scenarios – coexist with forms and atmospheres that evoke a metaphysical and surreal imagination.

Moreover, other forms of relation are established between photography and the materials of sculpture, based on the ability of both media to record and preserve traces of the passage of time, on the one hand through the impression of light and, on the other, through the sensitivity of surfaces. In his work, Gabellone creates a dialogue between abstraction and figuration, tactile and visual, natural and artificial, hyper-realism and decoration, augmenting the ambiguous relationship between the tactile qualities of an image and its existence in a non-physical elsewhere.

For his exhibition at GAMeC, the artist developed a series of brand-new works within a layout designed in relation to the museum's Spazio Zero. Three large wall-mounted works constitute the

backbone of the exhibition and are the outcome of a compositional and sculptural process arising from the visual elaboration of words and short phrases. Each of these extremely intricate levels was then cast in plastic resin, a material that can record even the tiniest variations in the material, but that at the same time dampens the perception of manual labour, drawing away from it. These three monumental high reliefs thus create a series of oscillations and perceptual ambiguities between sculpture, painting and language.

Moreover, the exhibition space is transformed by the presence of a huge installation conceived to transform the spectator's perceptual experience, stimulating the senses of touch and sight.

The exhibition is accompanied by a monographic catalogue that documents not only the project for GAMeC in Bergamo but also Gabellone's artistic production over the past four years. The catalogue, edited by Mousse Publishing, includes texts by Tom Morton, contributing editor of Frieze Magazine and an independent curator, and Alessandro Rabottini, curator of the exhibition.

Giuseppe Gabellone has participated in numerous collective exhibitions around the world, such as the Venice Biennale (1997 and 2003), the Biennale de Lyon (2003), the Biennale of Sydney (1998), the Santa Fe Biennial (1997) and Documenta in Kassel (2002). Solo exhibitions have been organized by institutions such as the Domaine de Kerguéhennec in Bignan (2008), the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago (2002) and the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin (2000). Gabellone's works have been shown at various institutions, including the Kunstmuseum Lichtenstein, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Museu Serralves in Porto, the Stedelijk Museum voor Aktuele Kunst in Ghent, the Bonnefanten Museum in Maastricht, the Museo d'Arte Contemporanea of Castello di Rivoli and the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Bologna.

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