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Marcello Jori

Pensiero Dipinto in Movimento Scritto

Opening: Friday, 4th October 2024, from 4:00 to 9:00 pm

Until: 15th November 2024

Exhibition venue: Casa Di Marino - Via Monte di Dio, 9, 80132 - Naples

Opening hours: Monday - Saturday 10.00 am - 1.00 pm / 3.00 - 7.00 pm

The Umberto Di Marino Gallery is pleased to present Marcello Jori's first solo exhibition at Casa Di Marino, entitled *Pensiero Dipinto in Movimento Scritto*. This exhibition follows two previous solo shows, *Supereroi* and *Jori Di Napoli*, organized by the gallery at its former location in Giugliano. Both exhibitions, focused on Jori's painting practice, already hinted at a narrative approach that the artist would later develop through his "painted writings."

This new project is entirely dedicated to that aspect of Jori's work, which, through drawing and comics, has succeeded in telling universal stories on multiple levels. Stories that today, especially among younger audiences, find new vitality, offering fresh insights into a medium like comic drawing, which has too often been relegated to "the lower circles of Hell." For the first time, this project aims to stage the complexity—at times disturbing, absurd, visionary, and erudite—of Jori's practice. The exhibition, which will take place in both the gallery and domestic spaces of Casa Di Marino, will resemble a small retrospective, reflecting on a gesture that Jori no longer sees as mere comic drawing but as *Pensiero Dipinto in Movimento Scritto* ("**Painted Thought in Written Movement**"), which also serves as the exhibition's title.

The show traces the evolution of Jori's work, from his early panels created in the '70s and '80s with the Valvoline group for magazines like *Linus* and *Frigidaire*, through the aggressive and provocative tone of comics like *Feto e Carletto*, where a baby and a fetus, behaving like adults, wreak havoc on the city in search of the lost maternal womb.

From the subversive, experimental, and ironic nature of his early works, the exhibition will also focus on the brightly lit, hyper-realistic panels he created for *Per Lui* magazine in the '80s, a pivotal stage leading to his large, dreamlike, mythological narratives, always tinged with irony and provocation, published by Rizzoli, such as *Lo Straordinario Viaggio del Mondo* and *La Storia Dipinta dell'Arte*. With the absurd ambition of writing the history of the world and of art, the artist brings this vision to life, fully aware that it remains a partial, personal, sometimes abstract, and deliberately altered history—both mythical and legendary.

It is a complex vision of the world and the arts that Jori offers the viewer, including through his own voice. Over the years, Jori has often read his own texts from the panels, adding a more intimate and personal tone to the stories. Just as happened with *Le Predicazioni*, read at Emi Fontana in Milan in the early 2000s, at the exhibition's opening, Marcello Jori will read to the public some of the most iconic passages from his history of art.

Through panels, original manuscripts, preparatory sketches, cover variants, and monumental portions of drawings on canvas, the exhibition will attempt to give form to the complex universe envisioned by Jori, painted through the movement of shapes, light, and writing. Over the years, this movement has come to life not only through his works but also through art magazines and other publications. His use of Flash Art as a comic periodical remains iconic, with each issue featuring a new chapter of *La Storia Dipinta dell'Arte*.

All these materials, along with sketches for objects created in collaboration with Alessi, cover designs for albums by singers like Patty Pravo, and drawings for fashion advertising campaigns featured in magazines like *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair*, as well as the original books of *è Pinocchio*, realized with Mazzoli gallery in Modena, and *Gli Albi dell'Avventura* produced with the Marconi Foundation in Milan, will be exhibited without any attempt to establish hierarchies. After nearly 50 years, Marcello Jori has finally given a definition to this entire body of work: **Pensiero Dipinto in Movimento Scritto**. A new life begins for the artist!

Marcello Jori
1951, Merano, IT

Marcello Jori was born in Merano, timeless. He starts his work in Bologna in the early 1970s, and from the very beginning of his activity, he pursues a total art project by taking up in a contemporary key the attitude of the Renaissance artist, painter, sculptor, architect and writer at the same time, capable of receiving inspiration from every artistic form. In fact, he confronts himself with different languages, ranging from painting to literature and illustration, from photography to design. He immediately began a surgical work on the figure and soul of the "Artist" through his body, his work and his thought. First, making use of photography, on the 'departed artist consecrated by history, then, on the living one, portraying him from life with painting. Those contemporary artists destined, according to Jori, to immortality. Practice always found in his work, leading him to the use of different media, necessary for the construction of a world as complex as the one that represents him today. He held his first exhibition in 1977 at the Galleria de' Foscherari in Bologna, curated by Renato Barilli. Beginning in the 1980s, after a period dedicated to painted writings that will make words a recurring sign throughout his career, he began the production of Crystals, precious gems, containers of energy and light, geometries that will lead him to repaint the world following the rules of his style. Significant works will be born that reach important results today, with the series of the Fields, Forests and Cities. In the same years he is among the founders of the "New Italian Comics." He publishes in Italy for "Linus," "Alter" and "Frigidaire," in France for Albin Michel in "L'Echo dea Savanes." He also collaborates with "Vogue" and "Vanity Fair" magazines.

In 1996, on the occasion of his solo exhibition at the Palazzo Comunale in Siena, he published, with texts by Stefano Benni and Alessandro Mendini, the volume *La città meravigliosa degli artisti straordinari*, an ambitious project in which he began the conceptual and pictorial construction of a city designed to host and celebrate special inhabitants: contemporary artists destined, according to Jori, to immortality, in which every building is the size of their own bodies, an ideal world of which the artist becomes the creator and guardian. In the 1990s he participated in the exhibition *Psycho*, curated by Christian Leigh, Adrian Dannatt and Donald Kuspit, in a exhibition with Dan Flavin, Sol LeWitt and James Croak, at Kunst Hall in New York and held a solo show at the Art Institute of Boston. From 1992 to 1998 he drew exclusively for the Japanese publishing house Kodansha. In the 2000s he published *Nonna Picassa*, a novel for Mondadori, and made useful explorations in the field of music. The experience led him to create an impressive set design for Vasco Rossi, a painted city of 20 by 70 meters, for *Rock sotto l'assedio*, a concert held at the San Siro stadium in Milan. In 2000, he held a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in Bologna curated by Danilo Eccher, in which the photographic work of the 1970s was repurposed. In Milan in 2003, at the Emi Fontana Gallery, he presents for the first time the *Predicazioni*, work-books written and illustrated by hand in a single copy, in which he recounts the lives of legendary artists in a new way. In 2007 he began collaborating with design companies such as Alessi and Moroso; during this period the comic strip, which the artist had abandoned, reappears in new forms, and so does painting. In 2010 he held his eighth solo exhibition at Galleria de' Foscherari in Bologna and exhibited at Galleria Giorgio Persano in Turin. He resumed his collaboration with the Marconi Foundation in Milan, where in January 2011 he held a solo exhibition entitled *Gli Albi dell'Avventura*, an important turning point in the path of his current research. In October 2011 he created a series of works for Diego Della Valle, presented in Paris at the Italian Embassy, in which he interprets some of the world's most famous monuments. He began a collaboration with *Corriere della Sera*, for which he made six covers and wrote about art as an artist. In the same year, he exhibited his *Giacimenti* in a solo show at the Ocean House in Miami. In 2013, he held a new exhibition *La Gara della Bellezza* at the Museion in Bolzano and at the same time the exhibition *La Città Meravigliosa degli Artisti Straordinari* at Castel Tirolo curated by Danilo Eccher, and for the occasion he published the fourth volume of the series *Gli Albi dell'Avventura* published by Skira. In the same year, ADN Collection in Bolzano dedicated a room to him curated by Elena Re. In 2014, for the bimonthly contemporary art magazine *Flash Art* he began the first serialized history of art, written, drawn and directed by an artist. In 2015 he held a major solo exhibition at the Marconi Foundation in Milan entitled *Le Grand Jour à l'Île de la Grande Jatte* with a catalog edited by Bruno Corà and produced the fifth volume of the series *Gli Albi dell'Avventura*, published by Skira. In the same year he participated in the exhibitions *Scenario di terra* at MART in Rovereto and *Come è viva la città* at Villa Olmo in Como. In 2016 he published for Rizzoli the volume *La storia dipinta dell'arte*, the first History of Art written by hand and painted by an artist, the English version of which was released in 2017 by Rizzoli New York. At Emilio Mazzoli gallery he holds his last two solo exhibitions, in 2017 *Marcello Jori is Pinocchio*, and in 2019 *È Nato*. In 2018 he created a manuscript and illustrated version of Carlo Collodi's *Le avventure di Pinocchio*, the first edition of which was published by Galleria Mazzoli in Modena and the second by Rizzoli in 2019. In the same year he participated in a group show at the Museion in Bolzano. In 2021 he won the Belluno/Cortina prize, curated by Renato Barilli. In 2024 his latest painted book, begun in Japan in the mid-1990s and finished in Paris in 2024 *Lo Straordinario Viaggio del Mondo* is published by Rizzoli, which is an opportunity to bring together two important moments of his colorful History without beginning and without end. He has participated in three Venice Biennials, the Paris Biennale, and two Rome Quadrennials. He has also exhibited in national and international galleries and museums, including: Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Rome; Castel Sant'Elmo, Studio Morra and Studio Trisorio, Naples; Studio Marconi and Fondazione Marconi, Milan; Galleria d'Arte Moderna and Galleria De' Foscherari, Bologna; Galleria Civica d'Arte Contemporanea, Trento; Hayward Gallery, London; Kunstverein, Frankfurt; Holly Solomon Gallery, New York City. He has had three solo exhibitions with Galleria Umberto Di Marino: the first *Supereroi* in 1996 at the Giugliano venue, *Jori di Napoli* at the Ex Chiesa delle Concezioniste, Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Europei, Palazzo Palumbo in Giugliano in 2000, and *Visto da qui_Supereroi* in 2019 at the Naples venue; he also participated in the group show *Carta Canta* in 2023 at the gallery's new venue, Casa Di Marino.