

The first important international event opening the festivities for the thirtieth anniversary of the Castello di Rivoli concerns the figure and work of Jan Dibbets, the interpreter of an intense cultural season in Europe and abroad and among the first artists to exhibit at the Museum for its inaugural show *Ouverture* in 1984. Installed in the rooms on the third floor of the Savoy residence, the exhibition proposes a vast and exhaustive excursus among the Dutch artist's most important works, beginning from his debut in the late 1960s to today. The event, curated by Marcella Beccaria and installed in close collaboration with the artist himself, presents the vastest retrospective ever dedicated to Dibbets by an Italian museum, including a precise selection of particularly significant works as his artistic course has unfolded, covering almost fifty years of contemporary art history. The selection, which includes works that for some time now have been part of the Castello's permanent collection, intentionally gives preference also to rare works, almost never shown in public in so far as housed for decades in private collections.

Dibbets is a Conceptual Art pioneer, with an international standing and importance for generations of artists after him. As Marcella Beccaria writes: "Rather than 'what' we see, the works of the artist lead us to ask 'how' we see, and it is precisely these fundamental questions that give rise to his work. In dialogue with some of the most salient moments of Western art culture, from Dutch painting to Italian art, and the relating theories on form and perspective, Dibbets's inquisitive mind knows how to create an innovative, individual course that has contributed in turn to establishing new artistic languages. Among the pioneers of Conceptual Art, and part of the emergence of Land Art as well as Arte Povera, from the late 1960s Dibbets has been one of the very first to single out a use for photography as a 'thinking' tool, carrying out a revolution the consequences of which have been further amplified in the present digital age."

### The Exhibition

Jan Dibbets. *Un'altra fotografia / Another Photography* opens with works that use the image of the horizon to investigate the never-before-seen possibilities of photography and the visual illusions tied to its two-dimensional plane. An everyday though intangible element, the horizon offers moments of reflection for the artist to develop his own specific mode of vision and creation of a new visual, cultural, and philosophical space. Visitors are welcomed, at the start of the itinerary, by the double video projection *Horizon – Sea III*, 1971, and relating studies done at the time, just like other works rarely shown in public, like *Five Island Trip*, 1969, and *Sea – Horizon*, 1971.

Dibbets's in-depth research by observing the horizon can be found in the following Room 34, with some historic works like *Flood Tide*, 1969, *Sea – Horizon 0° – 135°*, 1972. Belonging to the

Castello's collection is Comet Land/Sky/Land, 6° – 72°, 1973, part of the important series Comets, a group of works where the artist composes the photo image, installing the resulting photographs in arch-shaped dynamic compositions. The Museum also possesses the more recent Horizon Land – Sea, 2007.

For the first time presented to the Italian public is a series of very rare works on paper relating to the first Perspective Corrections, the series that is rightly considered crucial in the formulation of Conceptual Art.

The show continues in Room 35 with works that display Dibbets's attention to photography investigated in relating to the effects of light, analyzing the transformations the camera is or is not able to create, like in The Shortest Day at My House in Amsterdam, 1970, in The Shortest Day of 1970 Photographed from Sunrise to Sunset, Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1971, or in Daylight-Flashlight. Outside Light – Inside Light, 1971, the image sequence that concerns variations of natural light and the camera flash, done in Turin. Also made in Turin, and more precisely in the historic Sperone gallery, is Shadows on the Floor of the Sperone Gallery, 1971, where Dibbets focuses on forms drawn by the light on the floor. Windows also appear many times in following works like Tollebeek Spring II, 2000, or Santa Creus, 1994, Tilburg III (Green), 1999, selected for the show.

The New Colorstudies, which are found in Room 36, represent a very important group of works up to today and which originate from negatives taken between 1975 and 1976, when Dibbets decided to concentrate his attention on details of car bodywork and their color reflections.

Experimentation is a constant in Dibbets's oeuvre, and many ways of photographing are collected in Room 37. Never shown together previously, the Double Dutch Mountains compose photo "panoramas" of great refinement. Quite rare are the works from the series The Voyage of Captain SEH, 1976, a precocious example of "appropriated" photography. Instead, the Perspective Collection represents Dibbets's ability to reformulate, according to new premises, artistic matters that lie at the base of his conceptual investigations.

Through a selection installed in Room 38, the exhibition lingers upon Dibbets's rich output in the 1980s, when he reintroduced the use of painted images, juxtaposing them with photographs in works that research the perception of space, starting with buildings or their architectural details. In the first examples, the inclusion of painting concerns works inspired by the artist's Italian home in Tuscany, like for San Casciano Ceiling, 1980, or in the monumental San Casciano Tryptich, 1983–

1984. Among the works that round off the itinerary are Kröller Müller Saenredam II, 1987, which also bears witness to Dibbets's relationship with the master Dutch artist Saenredam and his well-known church interiors, the visual precision of which has at times inspired Dibbets.

Born in Weert, the Netherlands, in 1941, lives and works in Amsterdam. He studied at the Art Academy in Tilburg obtaining the Royal Grant for Painting in 1965, when he held his first solo show at Galerie 845 in Amsterdam. In 1967 he attended the St. Martins School of Art, London and in 1968 he exhibited at Konrad Fischer in Düsseldorf. In 1969 he started teaching at Atelier 63, Haarlem, the Netherlands, where he will continue teaching until 1998. In 1969 he is included in a number of shows, including "Earth Art," Cornell University, Ithaca, New York; "Konzeption – Conception," Städtisches Museum Schloss Morsbroich, Leverkusen, Germany and "Andre, Barry, Buren, Dibbets, Huebler, Kosuth, Lewitt, Long, Smithson, Weiner," Seth Sieglaub, New York and participated in seminal exhibitions such as "Op losse schroeven – situaties en cryptostructuren," Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; "Prospekt 69," Kunsthalle Düsseldorf; "When Attitudes Become Form," Kunsthalle Bern and had a solo show at Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld, Germany. In 1970 he is included in "Information," Museum of Modern Art, New York. In 1971 he participates in the "Guggenheim International Exhibition 1971," and had his first solo shows at Yvon Lambert in Paris and Galleria Sperone in Turin. In 1972 he is invited to participate at Documenta V, Kassel, to which he also contributes in 1977. In 1972 he was also protagonist of a number of solo shows including those at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem; the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam and represented Holland on the occasion of the Venice Biennale. In 1973-74 he worked in Rome and exhibited at "Contemporanea Incontri Internazionali d'Arte". In 1973 he had a solo show at Leo Castelli in New York and in 1974 his work was featured in "Eight Contemporary Artists," The Museum of Modern Art, New York. In 1979 he was awarded the Rembrandt Award and he took part to the Biennale of Sydney. In 1980 he had solo exhibitions at Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, the Netherlands; at Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, and Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht, the Netherlands, and he exhibited at Christian Stein, Turin and at Locus Solus, Genoa. In 1982 he was among the participants at Documenta 7, Kassel and the following year at the XVIII Biennale, São Paulo. In 1984 he started teaching at the Düsseldorf Art Academy and in the same year he is among the artists selected by Rudi Fuchs for the inaugural exhibition "Ouverture," at Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art, and at "Carnegie International 85", Pittsburgh. In 1987 major solo shows were held at Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York and Detroit Institute of Arts. In 1995 and was conferred The Sikkens Award for the window design for the Blois Cathedral, France. In recent years, the impressive exhibition history of Dibbets has continued to

grow, including solo shows at Witte de With, Rotterdam, 1996; Bawag Foundation, Vienna, 2000; De Pont, Tilburg, 2001; Centro Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, La Spezia, 2007; Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris, 2010; Cultuurcentrum Mechelen, Belgium, 2011. Recent galleries solo shows have been organized by Alan Cristea Gallery, London; Konrad Fischer Galerie, Berlin; Peter Freeman Inc., Paris; Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York; Giorgio Persano, Turin.

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