

« Getting into Mario Ceroli's studio means penetrating into the Arte Povera world and living a unique experience that I would like to share with all art lovers »

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Mario Ceroli (born in Castel Frentano, Italy, in 1938)

The Arte Povera prophet

October, 8 – December, 11 2010

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Mario Ceroli into his studio in Rome (on the left during the 70's and on the right in 2010)

Since the opening in Paris, Tornabuoni Art has inaugurated his space with a very important exhibition about Lucio Fontana (more than 60 works in the show) and has received over 4000 visitors in 2 months during Alighiero Boetti's retrospective (March, 19TH through June, 3TH 2010). Almost one year after, the gallery continues his high level cultural program presenting from the next 8th of October 50 works (from 60's to today) by Mario Ceroli, one of the most important protagonists of the Italian postwar and contemporary art period.

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The Arte Povera Prophet



Mario Ceroli has been universally acclaimed at the age of 27, when he was awarded in 1966 with the Sculpture Prize at the Venice Biennale for his wooden «Cassa Sistina» (a tribute to the Sixtine Chapel). Ceroli has realised important works for several prestigious institutions (such as the equestrian sculpture for the RAI, which has become the national broadcasting channel trademark; the central square, the Church and the theater in Porto Rotondo; a monumental sculpture in Fiumicino Airport Rome...), prominent collectors (Agnelli and Barilla among the others), and he has been responsible for the conception of the stage sets of world renowned theaters such as la Fenice-Venice, La Scala-Milan, the Bolchoi-Moscow, the Arenas of Verona and the Opera of Rome in the last thirty years.

On the left, Mario Ceroli in his studio in 2010

Since the 1960's Ceroli's work has made its mark by using natural wood in particular Russian pinewood, that he assembles with a variety of materials; burnt wood, lead glass, in line with the philosophy of the Arte Povera. In the 1960's while the artists of Pop Art were reinterpreting the daily life images, Mario Ceroli paid homage to the great classics of the history of art (Homage to Leonardo da Vinci, Sixtine Chapel, Paolo Uccello, Piero della Francesca, Andrea Mantegna) and reinterpreted his contemporaries like Giorgio De Chirico.

The term Arte Povera was used for the first time in September 1967, one year after Mario Ceroli received his prize at the Venice Biennale. One can find nevertheless, the roots of the principal aspects of this movement during the group show that took place at la Tartaruga gallery in Rome in 1965 that included Ceroli, Boetti, Pascali and other artists then all renamed as *poveristi*.

On the right: Cassa Sistina – Prize of the Venice Biennale 1966



Arte Povera is an extremely radical intellectual and artistic adventure which opposes itself to the established values of some important American artistic movements of his time such as pop art, op art. It establishes itself internationally through the art of Kounellis, Boetti and Pistoletto. Arte Povera attacked the corporate mentality with an art made of unconventional materials and style. It uses everyday materials, wood, stone, earth, fabric, plastic, neon lights, industrial waste, replacing them as a composition of artistic elements.

What could be more *Arte Povera* than the Cassa Sistina, a wooden sculpture where the visitor can walk in for the first time. Mario Ceroli likes to recall that the Venice Biennale installers wanted to destroy it as they thought it was merely a packing box!



Squilibrio, wood, Ø 400 cm Rome, international flights zone, Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino airport

The works of Mario Ceroli are rare on the market because he realised mostly very large works and installations, sometimes monumental, for private or public commissions. His works have been presented in several important exhibitions around the world: in the last one, "Italics", that took place in Palazzo Grassi (September, 27 2008 – March, 22 2009) then moved to MCA Chicago and has been devoted to Italian contemporary art, Ceroli appears next to Maurizio Cattelan, Francesco Vezzoli and Vanessa Beecroft.

MARIO CEROLI IN SOME DATES

1938 - Mario Ceroli birth in Castel Frentano (Chieti)

1966 - award for the Cassa Sistina sculpture during the Venice Biennale (Cappella Sistina)

1968 - achievement of Riccardo III scenography and conception, during 30 years, of very important stage sets of world renowned theaters such as La Fenice of Venice, La Scala of Milan, the Bolchoi of Moscow, the Arenas of Verona and the Opera of Rome.

1957 - supervision and decoration of Porto Rotondo Church in Sardegna, which will be followed by 6 others projects for churches.

2007 - Ceroli is called by the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome to assist at the official reopening after a long period of renovation, with a selection of his most important works.

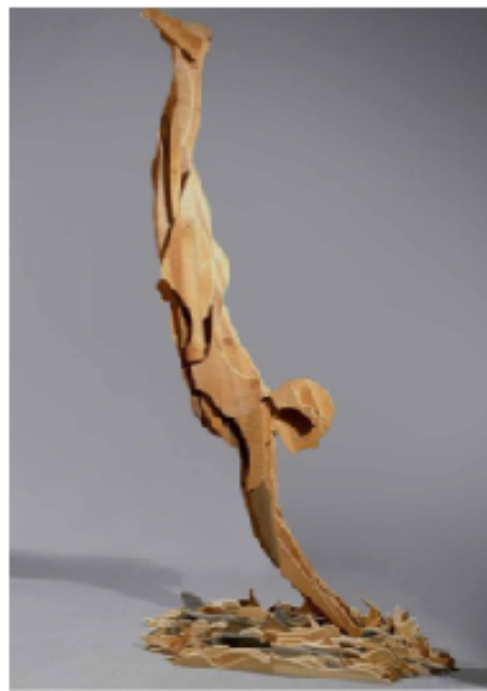
2009 - a contemporary Italian art exhibition called "Italics" takes place in Palazzo Grassi and Chicago MAC, where Mario Ceroli's works appear next to Maurizio Cattelan, Pezzoli and Vanessa Beecroft.

This is the contest in which Tornabuoni Art will show to the public and collectors the most complete set of works by the artist, retracing 50 years of work. The Tornabuoni Art exhibition will show his most important works such as a wooden wave 3 meters long and a bronze sphere named "Disequilibrio", 1 meter long.

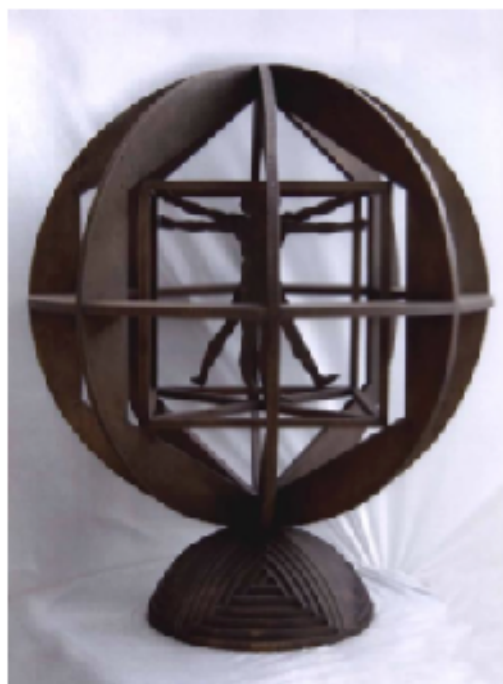
WORKS TO BE PRESENTED AT THE EXHIBITION IN TORNABUONI ART PARIS – October, 8 / December, 11, 2010



Wave – 175x390x200 cm



Plonger, 1990 - 240x118x50 cm



Equilibrio, 2010, bronze 1/9, 120X105cm – Applause, 1967, 285x260cm – Statue of Liberty, 1963, waved thin sheet 200x85x50cm





On the left, Mario Ceroli's studio, the diver and the wave, a similar wooden one will be exhibited in Paris; on the right side, a tribute to Leonardo da Vinci installed in the garden



Mario Ceroli, Gaïa Donzet and Michele Casamonti in the artist studio, 2010

About Tornabuoni Art

After the success reported by the retrospectives dedicated to Lucio Fontana and Alighiero Boetti, and between the two main French Art fairs - **Biennale des Antiquaires** and **FIAC**, Tornabuoni Art gallery continues its cultural activity organizing important retrospectives about the major Italian artists of the Post Second World War time.

Created in 1981 in Florence by Roberto Casamonti, in the street that gave the name to the gallery, Tornabuoni Art has subsequently opened offices in Crans Montana, Switzerland in 1993, Milan in 1995, Portofino in 2001, Forte dei Marmi in 2004, Venice in 2005 and finally in Paris in 2009.

Before being joined by his children Michele and Ursula, Roberto Casamonti worked with the most important Italian artist of the postwar period such as Alighiero Boetti, Lucio Fontana, Alberto Burri; his collection is now recognized for the masterpieces by Boetti, Pascali, Manzoni, Castellani, Pomodoro, Pistoletto, Rotella, Vedova, Ceroli; he also presents different works by great masters of modern art such as Wesselmann, Matta, Picasso, Warhol and Basquiat. Casamonti family also works with the new generation of Italian artists already internationally renowned.