

PRESS RELEASE

LA ROSA TATUATA

Jannis Kounellis and Mattia Preti together in an exhibition in Rome

With the famous title *La rosa tatuata*, a site specific installation, realized by Kounellis in the presence of the painting by Mattia Preti *// sacrificio di Muzio Scevola*, on 14th February Gallerja opens in Rome.

With this first event significant for the route the new exhibition space intends to trace in Rome, Gallerja in Via della Lupa offers an uncommon presence and specially conceived by Kounellis, a leading artist who in this city, like Burri, Turcato and Mafai – just to name some names – has greatly contributed to a cultural climate which since the 60s has come up to the present day.

The originality of this first exhibition of Gallerja is the will to make simultaneously present two great painters, the former, Mattia Preti, belonging to the Counter-Reformation sensibility and therefore to that painting whose leading exponent was Caravaggio, the latter, a contemporary artist, Jannis Kounellis, in whose works the evocation of the Counter-Reformation issues is very frequent, as well as the comparison with History, unavoidable parameter justificative of his current dialectic tensions with the present.

The exhibition *La rosa tatuata* by Bruno Corà, assiduous scholar of Kounellis' work, however, avails itself of the historical scientific contribution relating to Mattia Preti's work of Maurizio Marini, who has already devoted significant studies to the work of the Master from Taverna.

The oil painting on canvas by Mattia Preti *// sacrificio di Muzio Scevola* evokes the historical event of the gesture of the Roman hero who attempted on the Etruscan King Porsenna's life. Not at all intimidated

by the threats of being burnt at the stake by the same king if he had not revealed the secrets of the plot, Muzio Scevola put the hand which had missed the mark, on the brazier, burning it before the horrified Porsenna. The event which is a sign of the final victory of Rome with the peace offered by Porsenna, provides Preti with the plot of a painting Marini does not hesitate to consider as one of the works dating back to the years 1649-50 of the Roman period of Mattia Preti. In that sense, an essay in the exhibition catalogue offers interesting ideas for the knowledge of this work.

Intensively vivid and involving the action of Kounellis concentrates on a dream epiphany which, though establishing an objective distance between his work and the historical Calabrian painter's, shows to be capable of a subtle dialectic making the whole art simultaneously present and contemporary. As to this concept, Bruno Corà offers accurate references in his essay in the catalogue, which also show some elements characteristic of the future action of Gallerja.

The exhibition, which is open up to 21st April, the birth of Rome, will be documented by a relevant catalogue still in progress.

For any further information address to

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Monday – Saturday 11-20

JANNIS KOUNELLIS MATTIA PRETI

LA ROSA TATUATA

With the critical contributions of Bruno Corà and Maurizio Marini

OPENING on 14th FEBRUARY at 6.00 pm

15 FEBRUARY – 21 APRIL 2007

GALLERJA Via della Lupa, 24 (Fontanella Borghese) Roma