

CRISTIANO DE GAETANO: *SPEED OF LIFE*

Opening: 25th February 2017, 7pm

curated by Christian Caliandro

The Pino Pascali Museum hosts a well deserved homage to Cristiano De Gaetano, the artist who died in 2013 at the very young age of 37. The exhibition stretches and twists across the rooms of the Pino Pascali Museum like a story that is being told through the most famous works in modelling clay as well through the more intimate and less known pieces made in ceramic.

The “**Pino Pascali**” **Museum Foundation** in Polignano a Mare dedicates this retrospective - which will open on Saturday 25th of February at 7 pm - to **Cristiano De Gaetano**, unorthodox and talented artist born in Taranto in 1975 and died in 2013 at the young age of 37.

The exhibition, curated by **Christian Caliandro**, will retrace the most significant steps of the artist's research, from his debut dedicated to experimenting with new materials, new topics and new ways of approaching art, it will then follow the core of his analysis through the realization and development of painting with modelling clay on wooden shapes, until the works of the last period of his life in which he surprisingly discovered ceramic and realised a series of works that will be now exhibited together for the first time. This last phase of his artistic experience represents a return to his origin, to the moment in which his life as an artist began, as well as representing a jump forward.

Among the most important works shown in the exhibition we find: the photographic prints of the series *Size S size L* (2004), *Nurse* (2005), *Uncle* (2006), *Family in the Old City* (2007), *Woman in Flowers #2* (2007), *Ice Age* (2007), *Collapse* (2008), *Morgan le Fay III* (2008), *Brothers (Frida e Giordano)*, (2009), *Wedding* (2010), *Shadows* (2010) and the self-portrait made in ceramic *Untitled* (2011).

This work develops around some specific core topics: identity seen and experienced as constant mutation (following David Bowie's role and creative model); personal identity, dug and widened with time so as to include relatives, predecessors, strangers; a “biological” memory and therefore a narration of memories that tends to overflow its banks and to take on the edges of a whole figurative and symbolic world. A world made of fragments, flakes, refuse of past times, that rearranges and settles before our eyes: which is passing and will continue to pass, in a constant state of transition. A convincing and persuasive world which is also, at times, miserably apocalyptic.

Cristiano De Gaetano's work **is beautifully rounded up and self-contained, it keeps on throbbing** and making us wonder, showing art and art critics that another way is possible. This is a kind of approach - “a state of mind”- built through a constant dialogue with life, with existential space-time (his own and belonging to others).

His works have been realised in a very condensed period of time. Similarly to Pascali's works fifty years earlier, De Gaetano's works function as open devices pointing towards different, alternative and underground directrices of artistic production- and reception- of and in the present. These are works that remain like radiant cores, animated by vibrant energy and fresh vitality which are important qualities of De Gaetano's personality.

As Don De Lillo wrote with reference to David Foster Wallace: “A vitality persists, a stunned vigour in the face of the complex humanity we find in his fiction, the loss and anxiety, darkening mind, self-doubt. *There are sentences that shoot rays of energy in seven directions.*”

The exhibition is therefore an important occasion to rediscover and analyse the works of one of the most intelligent and most wildly creative artists of this early 21st century. This brief but intense creative experience (which must be seen in the context of the early 2000's, an extremely exciting period for Apulia) has touched a source, a hidden area, forgotten and precious, of Italian and western art which can prove extremely fruitful for the current generation of artists and for the generations to come.

The catalogue includes pieces by **Rosalba Branà**, director of the Pino Pascali Museum, **Christian Caliandro**, **Antonella Marino**, art critic and the author **Marcello Fois**.

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The exhibitions will run until the 7th of May 2017.

Opening hours: From Tuesday to Sunday 10-13 / 16-21. Closed on Mondays.

Telephone number. 080.424.9534 - 333.2091920

(The ticket office closes half an hour before the museum- tickets cost 2 euro plus reductions if applicable)

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