

MAMBOR

Opening May 23rd 2024 | 5-8 pm
May 23rd - September 28th 2024
Via Bocca di Leone 88, Rome

On **Thursday, May 23rd, Tornabuoni Arte Roma** will open an exhibition dedicated to **Renato Mambor**, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his death, in collaboration with the **Archivio Mambor** and with the scientific advice of **Maria Grazia Messina**.

The exhibition, through some **30 works**, aims to present the path and artistic practice of Renato Mambor, "the 'conceptual' artist, the most emotionally chilled, within the so-called 'Scuola di Piazza del Popolo'" (M. G. Messina). The exhibition highlights the substantial steps and the poetic and **formal coherence** always maintained from the earliest results, up to the latest productions. Despite the **plurality of languages** used and the multiplicity of intentions, Renato Mambor's work continuously speaks of **observation, language, communicability and relationship with the other**.

The narrative of the exhibition invites us to proceed from the most historical works to the latest production, then retracing it in reverse, implementing Mambor's own wish: "I would like the work to be reread today from today. Now that we live. [...] The artist is not the one who certifies the present but the one who sets the seeds for the future."

The exhibition opens with **Senza titolo (Untitled)**, 1958, a tempera on paper that still belongs to a phase of research and experimentation, close to the Informal art that had just passed (his signature is not yet Mambor, but Mambo. This is the time of his first important exhibitions: the 1958 **Premio Cinecittà** and the following year *Mambo(r), Schifano, Tacchi*, curated by Emilio Villa at the **Galleria Appia Antica**.

These are also the years of his approach to **cinema, set work and acting**: working at the gas station on the Via Tuscolana, not far from **Cinecittà**, he got to meet, among others, **Federico Fellini**, who would lead him to appear in **La Dolce Vita**.

The **1960s** opened with a production - close to Lo Savio's minimalism - that made use of **everyday objects**, such as industrial **wood panels or clothespins**, in an attempt to "take the self out of the work," seeking objectification, as seen in the two works **Oggetto verde (Green Object)** and **Oggetto rosso (Red Object)**, both from 1960. Objectification and research are the common thrust of the generation of artists of the **Scuola di Piazza del Popolo**, "cold in art warm in life" (R. Mambor).

This attitude leads him to make use of the conventional symbols of **road signs**: flat silhouettes still painted on wood: objective, recognizable by all, decontextualized and transported in the work (**Uomo segnale (Signal Man)**, 1962).

The **standardization** and resetting of emotionality is heightened through the **reiteration** of the same silhouette with a rubber matrix in the 1963 series **Timbri (Stamps)**: "The use of a recognizable iconic sign was a common point of reference between the artist and the audience" (R. Mambor).

On display is a group of six works related to the **Ricalchi (Tracings)** series, first presented in 1965 on the occasion of his first solo exhibition at Plinio De Martiis' La Tartaruga gallery. Here Mambor examines images of **riddles** devoid of face, individuality and expression but **capable of communicating an action**: "I wanted to illustrate, to show, a verb. Embrace. Drink. Opening the door. The gesture of sleep..." (R. Mambor).

Dated 1985 is the **visual poem Albero Blu (Blue Tree)**, an unpublished work in which slides are accompanied by the artist's voice. Here it is presented in dialogue with the 1966 **detachment** of the same name **L'albero blu (Blue Tree)** through which Mambor analyzes and separates the various moments of painting making: "I examined the executive **processes of painting** through techniques of deconstruction in time and space. The drawing and the background were executed in different times and spaces and then recomposed by overlapping" (R. Mambor).

TornabuoniArte

He moved to Genoa and in 1967 is invited by Germano Celant to exhibit at La Bertesca gallery for the exhibition *Arte Povera-Im spazio*. In these years he concentrated on the series of works called **Itinerari (Itineraries)**, which he presented in the same gallery and at L'Ariete gallery in 1968. Again a matrix is at the center of Mambor's work, this time **rollers for faux tapestries (Itinerario (Itinerary), 1968; Tappezzeria (Tapestry), 1970)**: "A modular design was already engraved on the roller, all that remained for me was the gesture of execution. **I delegated to the instrument the task of style**" (R. Mambor).

In the following years the work of *Itinerari (Itineraries)* would take an **environmental, photographic and performative dimension (Macchina traccialinee (Tracing machine), 1968 and Itinerario intimo (Intimate itinerary), 1969)**. Among the most iconic actions is the one with Emilio Prini in the Genoa studio: Mambor "asks Prini to apply the paint roller to his own body, turning himself into the material support for the action" (R. Perna).

The idea of **Evidenziatore (Highlighter)**, shown here and exhibited in 1993 on the occasion of the XLV **Biennale di Venezia** curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, dates back to 1970. It is a metal object that opens and closes, hooks up with the function of **highlighting objects while leaving them in their proper place**: "I wanted to show things as they really are, without alterations, displacements, modifications. I wanted to investigate reality, so *Evidenziatore (Highlighter)* took the form of a mechanical hand as a metaphor for grasping reality" (R. Mambor).

In the following years Mambor decides to entrust **others** with *Evidenziatore (Highlighter)*. Children, friends, photographers, artists and critics are thus made an effective part of the creative process and the **interplay of relationship between the artist, Evidenziatore (Highlighter) and the object highlighted**. The focus of the research is to place attention on this very relationship: "enter the other's gesture. Something will change" (R. Mambor).

Since the mid-1970s, for more than 10 years, Mambor has devoted himself to **theater**, forming an experimental company: **Gruppo Trousse**.

The exhibition then continues with works, from the 1980s to the 2000s, when painting returns a predominant part in his production. To this period belong the works **Gli Osservatori (Maschera) (The Observers (Mask)), 1983; Osservatori bianchi (White Observers), 1996; L'uomo geografico / fondo grigio (Geographical man / grey background), 2012; Le Coltivazioni Musicali (Musical Cultivations), 2011**. "In the early 1980s I started working on an aesthetic experience that I called *Osservatori (Observers)*[...] I am not interested in who the person is, the observer is not a portrait to the person, but I am interested in what the person does: the act of observing" (R. Mambor). **Sculpture** also becomes a structural part of Mambor's new production. His research investigates space and how to occupy it, a probable legacy of the theater experience.

Closing the exhibition is the work **Fili (Threads), 2012**. A series of spools of colored threads is arranged on a wall according to a linear sequence; a double silhouette holds a skein. Separate units to the viewer's eye are actually linked together; motionless yet in action.

*There is nothing and no one who is truly separate from the rest,
life manifests itself in relationship.
Between the painter and the making of the picture, between the painting and the viewer....
These Threads in art are what binds us to fellow travelers,
to contemporary history,
to the past,
to the different forms of art.* (R. Mambor)

Tuesday - Saturday
h 10am - 1 pm / 2-7 pm
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