

NUOVA ICONA

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PRESS RELEASE

Lorenzo Manenti
La dignità prima del pane
Solo show

Nuova Icona presents a solo exhibition by Lorenzo Manenti at Oratorio of San Ludovico, opening on Friday 25 of October.

Manenti exhibits two series of works (a selection of), two decorated boards and one video work. "La dignità prima del pane" ("dignity before bread", 2011 – 2013), is a series that takes the cue from the Arab spring events, underlining how the big popular uprising started from Tunisia in 2010 spring, was born from a desire of freedom and for the human dignity to be recognized, more than because of starvation and struggles.

On a wooden support the artist works with paints, acrylics, enamel and insulating tape: an extreme economy of means to show the decorative richness and spiritual depths of the Islamic world. The importance of a community of people and its history.

To hold on the boards, there are couples of used sneakers: they're the shoes of the battle, that in the Arab countries people carry on in civilian, comfortable clothes.

The boards of the series "la dignità prima del pane", are at the same time metaphors, portraits, statements.

Dealing with the theme of clothes is again the series "ADIDAS, war is casual" (2012-2013): reportage photographs from the battle fields, that the artist found in the web, branded Adidas, and increased in size, changing them in cynical advertisement posters.

Which is the meaning of words like "globalization" and "democracy"?

A specific speech are worth the two works "Quando sarete innanzi a Dio" (When you will be in front of God, 2013), e "Dio+Dio+Dio+Dio" (God+God+God+God, 2013), both of them a development of the series "La dignità prima del pane".

The title of the first one is an homage to the Ridley Scott movie "The Crusades", in particular the dialogue between King Baldovino IV and Baliano of Ibelin "...[...]Even if those who presume to move you are Kings ore power men, when you will be in front of God you won't say "but they told me to do that" or "it was not worthwhile at the moment", it will not be enough..". The board reminds the decoration of an antique find conserved at the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul. It contains the name of Alì, repeated 4 times in the Kufic language, the majestic Arab language. Alì was the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, Alì is the last of the 4 well directed caliphs, Alì is one of the 99 names of God and means the Almighty. He would have used the Prophet sword, named Dhù l-Fiqàr (the one that discriminates): all this means that Alì had the faculties to discern the Truth from the False, the Evil from the Good. The work is thus a reflection on the Judgment Day, or better, starting from the concept of Judgment Day, that's common to all religions, it's a reflection on the human behaviour and on the meaning of Good and Evil, that's too often confused and betrayed, especially in the relationship between the East and West of the world.

Manenti poses questions that dig in the depth of the human mind, working in an abstract manner and at the same time remaining faithful to the decorative models that he is inspired of and investigating them. This is reiterated by the work "Dio+Dio+Dio+Dio" (2013), where the decoration reveals itself as the rhythmical, psalmodial repetition of the name of the Almighty.

As soundtrack the audio of the video "Quando sarete innanzi a Dio", 2013, in which the artist is filmed while working, accompanied by a sacred Armenian music. We see a physical, repetitive, hard work: the body itself becomes part of the work, as a sacrifice to God or to the idea of God; it is an act of extreme deference in which every observant of every religion recognises himself. This is why the Armenian music doesn't contrast with the Islamic decoration, that doesn't contrast with the catholic architecture of the oratorio.

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Lorenzo Manenti

Born in 1978.

He's been a student of prof. Giulio Albrighoni.

He's travelled in Egypt, Iran, Syria, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, in Istanbul and Jerusalem.

A selection of group exhibitions: Il Miracolo, L. Manenti, M. Mapelli, R. Pesenti, spazio d'arte PISCINACOMUNALE, Milano, 2013; ArtVilnius'13, stand B-art contemporary + galleria Cart, Vilnius, 2013; *Black sea*, curated by V. Agosti, gallery Avalon Island, Orlando, Florida, USA, 2012; *Open studio_Figurazione Indipendente*, curated by E. Genna, associazione Artigirovaghe, Milano, 2011; *Le Meduse*, curated by V. Agosti, Spazio Nono 1, Fabbrica del Vapore, Milano, 2010; *Frammenti (italienische bildende kunst)*, Rote fabrik, Zurigo, 2005.

Solo Exhibitions: *Mesopotamia perduta, suggestioni pittoriche*, introduction curated by S. Casini e L.P. Nicoletti, Civico Museo Archeologico, Bergamo, 2009; *Guerre et 'Paix' à Bagdad*, double solo show, curated by N. Rostkowski, Galerie Orenda Art International, Parigi, 2008; *Lost Iraq*, curated by A. Pasquali, spazio d'arte PISCINACOMUNALE, Milano, 2008;

Curators: Elisa Genna and Vittorio Urbani

Opening: Friday October 25, h.18. The exhibition opens until November 24 2013.

Thursday 3 - 7 pm; Friday to Sunday 10am - 2 pm; 3 - 7 pm

[Oratorio di San Ludovico, Venezia \(Calle dei Vecchi, Dorsoduro 2552\)](#)

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