

## GALLERIA POGGIALI / PIETRASANTA

**Fabio Viale**

***Venere Italica***

**Vernissage Friday 29 July 2016 7 p.m. | 12 midnight**

On Friday 29 July 2016 Fabio Viale (Cuneo, 1975) will present the new work *Venere Italica*, a sculpture in white Carrara marble and pigments specifically created for the Via Garibaldi premises of the Galleria Poggiali. The statue is constructed on a scale of 1:1 compared to Canova's original, 173x52x75 cm, and entirely tattooed on the back.

This work revives the poetics of the Piedmont artist in the confrontation between contemporary tattoos and classical statuary as perceptive disorientation. Indeed, the rear of the statue is entirely painted with colourful tattoos referring to the Japanese criminal organisation Yakuza.

*Venere Italica* is another in the series of Fabio Viale's sculptural projects that draw on masterpieces of the past – including the *Mona Lisa*, the Vatican *Pietà* and the limbs (hand and arm) of Michelangelo's *David* – all sculpted with outstanding skill and at the same time revisited in line with the conceptual strategy of sensory disorientation that characterises Viale's work. This is implemented through the dissimulation of the material, of a striking technical quality, and the introduction of tattoos that are frequently inspired by the Soviet prison world or, as in this case and more recently, that of the Japanese mafia.

The classical theme of the *Venus pudica*, shown in the act of concealing herself behind a veil, seen as the embodiment of ideal beauty far removed from the turmoil of passions, is associated with the presence of tattoos originating from the criminal underworld. This is done with the intention of destabilising and positing a dimension that is immediately staggering.

The comparison is also related to a dimension of civilisation, considering the current diffusion of the practice of tattoos.

Fabio Viale's projects always have the character of research, of breaking boundaries, of critically addressing acquired perceptions, as in the case of the very first boat in marble capable of floating and moving.

The *Venere Italica*, the original of which by Canova is conserved in the Palatine Gallery in Florence, creates an imaginary bridge with the *Souvenir Pietà* (the Christ of the Vatican *Pietà*), which at this very time, and up to 2 August, is being exhibited in dual version, one facing the other. This is the first work by a contemporary artist to be displayed in the Basilica of San Lorenzo in Florence, in the complex with the highest concentration of works by Michelangelo in the world, in an exhibition curated by Sergio Risaliti and sponsored by the Florence City Council.

Fabio Viale was awarded the Henraux Prize for sculpture in 2013, and we should also mention the solo show at the Museo del Novecento in Milan in 2014, the award of the Cairo Prize in 2015, the performances with *Ahgalla*, the marble boat that can float and move, at the Venice Biennale, in Gorky Park in Moscow, on the Po and on the Tiber, as well as the one-man shows PUNK and + 0 – at the Galleria Poggiali of Pietrasanta and Florence in 2015 and in early 2016.

**Galleria Poggiali / Pietrasanta**

Via Garibaldi 8

Fabio Viale *Venere Italica* up to 19 August 2016  
t 3349236625 10.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. | 6 p.m. – 12 midnight