



The city of Pietrasanta

presents

Truly

Solo exhibition by **Fabio Viale**
in the symbolic sites of the city

curated by **Enrico Mattei**

27 June – 4 October 2020

Opening | Saturday 27 June 2020 at 6 p.m.

Pietrasanta, 26 May 2020. Piazza del Duomo and the Church and Cloister of Sant'Agostino: from **Saturday 27 June 2020** the most picturesque public spaces of the **town of Pietrasanta** will be inhabited by the monumental works of the sculptor **Fabio Viale** (Cuneo 1975).

In **Truly** – an exhibition curated by **Enrico Mattei** and produced with the support of the **Galleria Poggiali** – the artist is responding to an invitation made directly by the **Mayor Alberto Stefano Giovannetti** and by the **Councillor for Culture and Tourism, Senator Massimo Mallegni**, to display up a series of works conceived in dialogue with various **urban sites** up to **4 October 2020**.

As Councillor Mallegni explains, this summer **Truly** will be *'the main exhibition event of the Pietrasanta Summer 2020 season, emphasising the role of culture as a crucial driving force for civilisation and social impetus. Through the work of an artist of international repute, the exhibition will offer an essential interpretation of Pietrasanta's desire for recovery, in compliance with the rules and with the utmost attention to safety.'*

After his solo show at the *Glyptothek Museum* in Munich, his exhibit in the Venice Pavilion at the most recent *Venice Biennale* and his exhibition at the *Pushkin Museum* of Moscow, in this show **Fabio Viale** interprets **the meaning of our period of enforced isolation**, presenting – among other works – the **world premiere** display of his sculpture **The Three Graces** inside the **Church of Sant'Agostino**.

Made in white marble and featuring minutely detailed drapery, the subjects of the sculptural group are three women originating from **Ghardaia**, an Algerian city that is home to the Ibadi school of Islam. Here the women wear the traditional *haik*, a loose, white, full-length garment wrapped around the head and body, leaving only one eye uncovered. Viale, having come into contact with this city on one of his frequent travels, wishes to focus particular attention on the **issue of denied freedom** and, at the same time, on the **clichéd perception of this that Westerners have**, the extent of which they have come to realise now, in this time of severe restrictions.

Responding to the stimulus of the **new iconography to which we are all subject** – the so-called personal protective equipment, and in particular the face **masks**, which we were not used to but have now become familiar with as we will continue to be – **The Three Graces** creates a **visual and semantic short-circuit** which, despite the title, has no classical reference whatsoever. Linking up with the symbolism of the veil and the experience of social distancing, based on suspicion of the other, especially when veiled, the sculpture opens up to **religious and behavioural meanings**.

The positioning of the sculpture in the **Church of Sant'Agostino** accentuates its **mystical and symbolic charge**, stimulating a dialogue on the issues of **spirituality and personal, religious**



and meditative freedom. This is also suggested by the decision to juxtapose it in the display with **Stargate**, a sculpture made out of Arabescato marble from Mount Altissimo consisting of two monumental fruit crates (over two metres high) joined together to leave a **breach** in the space, which is at once a passage and a **boundary** to be overcome, associated with outcomes of new **spirituality** and **emancipation**.

As **Sergio Risaliti** – Director of the **Museo Novecento of Florence** and author of an essay in the catalogue – writes *‘underlying Viale’s work there is always a respectful knowledge of matter, a virtuous relationship between technique and poetry, materials and tools, man and nature that he has cultivated over the years. This is what has led him to perfect a creative process that has as its purpose, not of other considerations, the enhancement of the formal properties of the stone and the conceptual and figurative qualities of the human imagination.’*

During the show **Fabio Viale**, who has a long-standing bond with Versilia related to the selection and working of marble, will also be displaying some of his large-scale **tattooed marbles** in **Piazza del Duomo**. The signs made on the marble represent a personal combination of the current trends in tattooing, from those already experimented belonging to the **Japanese** and **criminal underworld**, to the new directions emerging from the world of **South America** and the **Trappers**. The artist confirms his tendency to decode contemporary sensibilities by composing an **original transversal language** that draws on a species of *Old Style* signal universe. Outstanding among these works are **Souvenir David** – a masterful hollow face, a sort of monumental mask of Michelangelo’s *David*, on which the artist has experimented this new type of tattoo **for the first time**; a large **torso inspired by the Torso Belvedere** and an original work, a **torso** inspired by the **Torso Gaddi** created in collaboration with the famous **creative director Marcelo Burlon**. The marble surface is tattooed with his famous motifs, a daring combination of natural elements and contemporary stylistic features.

Displayed in the **Cloister of Sant’Agostino** and the adjacent ground-floor rooms is a series of works mapping the artist’s career: from **Infinito** – a sculpture in black marble representing the entwined tyres of a SUV – to a version of **La Suprema**: two fruit crates featuring a magnificently realistic wood effect.

Finally, another work in white marble will be set up in **Marina di Pietrasanta** on the **Pontile di Marina** popularly known as ‘la Piazza al mare’, the square on the sea.

A catalogue of the show, with essays by **Enrico Mattei, Sergio Risaliti and Massimiliano Simoni** will be produced and presented to the public on **Saturday 1 August 2020**.

With the support of

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FURTHER INFO

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