

GIAN DOMENICO SOZZI

perlepie

opening: thursday 10th november 2022, 6-9 pm

closing: january 2023

hours: from tuesday to saturday, 4-8 pm

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STUDIO STEFANIA MISCETTI is proud to present *perlepie*, the sixth solo exhibition of work by **Gian Domenico Sozzi** at the gallery. The pieces on show – all produced this year, and many on display for the first time – constitute a series of silk-screen prints on mirrors, which the artist has created using old paintings that have fallen into decay.

Sozzi's practice is characterised by intimate and personal memory; by the rediscovery and re-evaluation of fragments of the everyday; and in his hands their existence, ignored or forgotten, ultimately acquires new meaning.

The artist's relationship with the Studio Miscetti has deep roots that date back to the 1990s. As early as 1992, Sozzi presented a series of original photographs and sculptures, which formed the basis of *tête à tête*. In 1996, the artist-actor was both architect and subject of a multiform portrait in *cielospettacolo*, whose play of black-and-white images brought together a collage of environmental proportions. Meanwhile, for *anatra muta* (2000) and *so it goes* (2008), he breathed new life into found objects which he stored, kept safe, and then unveiled. Finally, in 2009 he played a central role in a special edition of the annual SHE DEVIL exhibition with his video piece *Brava* (2006).

perlepie came out of a chance intuition on the unexpressed potential of long-forgotten canvasses. Following this epiphany/revelation, Sozzi decided to seek out these pictures in the store rooms of museums; before pushing them to interact with the mirror's mutable, reflective nature through the use of silk-screen printing.

With this approach, he imbues new light into the faces and details of time-worn and damaged paintings. The depth of the mirror and the black ink underline the paintings' violated nature, emphasising the tears and folds in the canvas, as if to celebrate the material's very frailty.

Some of the works from the *perlepie* series featured in a solo exhibition held at the artist-run CLER space in Milan last spring.

Milan, Friday 4 March 2022

"The sun, most abundant up here in the tower, casts its shadows everywhere: between the bookshelves, on the sofas, on the walls and windowpanes – but also on that extremely frayed canvas over there. For years it has been sat, along with its saintly bodies, next to the worktable, waiting to be restored or perhaps rolled up to go into the attic – or worse still, left to expire in a cloud of dust, vanishing like a dandelion's head. But one day the sun lit up a pair of little daisies at the base of that canvas – daisies which the Virgin nearly trampled all over – and it is from the reddish hues of those countryside gems that the pious were born. That's how the search for works forgotten in museum stores began – forgotten because they were in pieces, torn, peeling, or had occasionally been stitched with new faces – but always left in darkness. And so, flirting with dust and its radical opacity, I decided to give them the chance of a future: dressing them up in a funeral cloak, forcing their images into the depths of a mirror until they became pictures in exile, shy walk-on parts, and in some cases epiphanies. First, it was the details: a flower, a hand, a cherub's wing, a lamb's hoof, the foot of a bearded saint, a young shepherd, or a flying face (perhaps taken from another canvas). Then I scraped together images that verged on nothing: a portrait of a woman on a broken panel whom they say is from Brina; a gentleman by Ridolfo or his workshop; a pope copied from Capodimonte; a young man in a striped doublet scratched by Boltraffio's cat; and that broodingly handsome figure with the luscious lips, for whom they say there is no index card, only a number – though not an unlucky one at that: on the contrary, it keeps renewing itself, like the moon."

Gian Domenico Sozzi

Born in Castello di Solaro in 1960, **Gian Domenico Sozzi** studied art at DAMS in Bologna. In 1983, he moved to Florence where he began working in Luciano Bartolini's studio and where, in 1985, he held his first solo exhibition at Galleria Schema. Since then he moved first to Berlin and then to New York where he created the *Mar d'Africa* cycle of works that he exhibited in Paris at the Montenay Gallery and in Munich at the Thomas Gallery. In 1992, at STUDIO STEFANIA MISCETTI in Rome, he inaugurated *r-Idolini*, sculptures and photographs as witnesses to an operation on known and unknown heads, which he also presented the following year at Studio Casoli in Milan. In 1996, he returned to STUDIO STEFANIA MISCETTI with *cielospettacolo*, a work that saw him "marry" twelve célibataires and which he presented the following year at the Montenay Gallery in Paris and in the Milanese space of A&M Bookstore. In 2000, again at STUDIO STEFANIA MISCETTI, he presented *anatra muta*: a series of monochrome papers visible on the back of a purpose-built wall/iconostasis at the back of the gallery. In 2002, at Studio De Carlo in Milan, he exhibited large-format photographic prints as *Testimoni di un anonimo prender tempo*. In 2006, at Galleria Zero in Milan, he presented the *Brava* video (found footage) for the first time, which was later shown in Berlin at the Isabella Bortolozzi Gallery, at the Fesch Museum in Ajaccio and at the Galleria Civica Montevergini in Siracusa. In 2008, he returned to STUDIO STEFANIA MISCETTI in Rome with *so it goes* and the following year he realised a site-specific installation entitled *Red Carpet* at Galleria Francesco Pantaleone in Palermo. In 2012, invited as a special guest at Mars in Milan, he presented *Bella Ciao* and in 2017 with *Pretious* he realised his first solo exhibition at Studio Dabbeni in Lugano. In 2018, on the occasion of the exhibition dedicated to Gaudenzio Ferrari, he presented a video dedicated to the Piedmontese artist's last work at Casa Testori. In 2020, he participates with *Fatima* in the group exhibition *Come prima, meglio di prima* at Galleria Massimo De Carlo, Milan.