



Florence, via Maggio 58r

FRANCO IONDA

23 September – 30 October 2016

Private view: 22 September, 6:00 pm

Press release

Tornabuoni Arte Contemporary Art (Florence, via Maggio, 58 r) will inaugurate on **22 September 2016**, an exhibition dedicated to the works of **Franco Ionda**.

Characterised by a political militancy within a theoretical revolutionary context, Ionda's artistic career has remained consistent from the start while acquiring new narratives and subjects over time. His references lie in Eastern European literature, the Russian avant-gardes and Futurism. The artist frequently quotes Vladimir Majakovskij: "Look: they have decapitated the stars again and bloodied the sky like a slaughterhouse", a phrase which has become a sort of mantra for the artist. The decapitated stars are witnesses of earthly injustices, of the wars that have always been and will always be. A message, which Ionda transforms into elementary drawings, paintings, sculptures, collages and video works. He tells tales of wars and suffering, of peoples near and far who are forced to migrate, stories that repeat themselves cyclically and that are still dramatically contemporary. In Ionda's works there is a search for the essence of things and an obsession to investigate the light that gives them form, that makes them real, existing, light. For his paintings he uses a chromatic scale that is reduced to the three primary colours, red blue and yellow, to which he adds black and white, while for his sculptures he uses materials such as wood, aluminium and marble. These are constructions that find a compositional balance through the material that bears the form and colour.

On show will be works, different in their technique as in their period, which stretches from the late 1990s until today. One will find the "thematic cycles" that characterise the artist's career and proceed simultaneously through time: one dedicated to "decapitated stars" which includes *Sempre più nero* (1994), *Stelle migratorie* (2000), and the more recent *Democrazia*, a marble sculpture from 2012; the "nails" series, but also works like *Il liquido dei nostri occhi* (1995), and *Maternità* (1999), modern reliquaries, caskets that contain photomechanical elaborations transcribed onto wood and immersed in cooked linen oil. Also exhibited are, among others *Cacciata dal Paradiso*, *Promenade 3-4* or *Alone 3*, where silhouetted people wander in search of a lost identity.

The exhibition concludes with *Smarriti nello spazio*, a 2003 video piece in which all the characteristics of his work converge.

Open until 30 October, the exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue with a text by **Gino Pisapia**.

Franco Ionda was born in Florence in 1946. After graduating from the Accademia delle Belle Arti di Firenze, he won bursaries that allowed him to continue his studies abroad, in Salzburg and Finland. Ionda was immediately drawn to abstract painting, which – inspired by “The cloud wearing trousers”, a poem by Majakovskij – he developed into a personal language characterised by stars and great aluminium nails that refer to deep considerations on the human condition and on the relationship between the individual and society.

His works are devoid of any decorative intent; he uses metal and aluminium pigments to create poetic vibrations between modernist fervour and poetic melancholy.

“These decapitated stars could be angels, but also none of these, ... so poetry has used stars like a vision, a universal sign linked to disappointment because the stars have fallen” observes Amnon Barzel in an encounter in the desert in September 2013.

Tornabuoni Arte - Contemporary Art - Arte Contemporanea

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Exhibition opening times: Monday 15:00 -19:30. From Tuesday to Friday 10:30 – 13:00 / 15:00 – 19:30 – Saturday 10:30 - 13:00 / 14:00 - 19:00.

Tornabuoni Arte

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