



GALLARATE (VA) – MA*GA MUSEUM
DECEMBER 17, 2023 – APRIL 7, 2024

MICHELE CIACCIOFERA
CONDENSING THE INFINITE

Curated by Alessandro Castiglioni

From December 17, 2023, to April 7, 2024, the MA*GA in Gallarate (VA) will host *Condensing the Infinite*, a solo exhibition by Michele Ciacciofera (Nuoro, 1969).

Curated by Alessandro Castiglioni and realized with the support of BUILDING, the exhibition presents a project that evokes the artist's journeys from Sardinia, through the Alpine arch, reaching Brittany, and finally, Scotland. These travels are a quest for the archetypal forms underlying the cults and identities of peoples who, through ancient sculptural practices, aspired to create a dialogue between the earth and the sky, between finite humanity and infinite absolutes. Ciacciofera's direct experience of these places, especially his internalization of them, is fundamental to the creation of his artwork. After the MA*GA stage, the exhibition will move to the Centre d'Art Contemporain Passerelle in Brest, Brittany, in the second half of 2024.

Condensing the Infinite reveals the artist's fascination with megalithic or monolithic forms, such as Menhirs and steles, capable of imparting sacredness and recognizability to specific territories. They are immortal symbols of a significant technological, social, cultural, and economic revolution, such as the Neolithic period or civilizations like the Etruscan, Phoenician, or Egyptian. The history of these archetypes seems to connect Ciacciofera's biography, his microcosm, with the macrocosm of universal narratives. The great stones that traverse the Mediterranean, continental Europe, and Northern Europe symbolize this journey: from Sicily, where the artist grew up, to Sardinia, his birthplace, passing through the Alpine and pre-Alpine regions around MA*GA, then reappearing in the Celtic territories of Brittany in France and the islands of the British Isles like Scotland.

The exhibition takes the form of an environmental installation, divided into three partitions, recreating sculptural alignments in the MA*GA exhibition space, reminiscent of regions where menhirs persist. In a poetic dialogue, three-dimensional vertical forms will confront horizontal installations or paintings and sounds, collectively evoking both the Mediterranean water cult and the sacredness of stones, in a grand ode to nature that Ciacciofera's work overall addresses. Visitors are immediately greeted by a series of glass sculptures, created at the CIRVA Centre International de Recherche sur le Verre et les Arts Plastiques in Marseille. These sculptures reinterpret not only the physical dimension of the Menhir but also coexist with spherical forms related to the myth of water.

In the second space, small votive boxes dialogue with nine colorful steles, resembling complex architectural theaters produced by the artist through the reuse of paper, cardboard, and discarded materials in a symbolically and intentionally eco-friendly creative process. A sound piece specially

created for the occasion accompanies these steles, creating a synesthetic and immersive environment that invites the viewer to get lost in a place both natural and imaginary. These sounds, recorded live in nature and rhythmically reworked using electronic patterns, continue the sound work previously presented by the artist for Documenta 14 in Athens and Kassel with *The Density of the Transparent Wind*.

The exhibition path at MA*GA concludes with a site-specific installation in ceramics and natural moss in dialogue with a triptych painting, reminiscent of the exhibition hosted by **BUILDING TERZO PIANO** in Milan and curated by Angelo Crespi, scheduled from January 16 to February 17, 2024. Here, Ciacciofera will display a series of polychromatic Murano glass sculptures previously exhibited at the Petit Palais in Paris and a large-format painting.

The exhibition is realized with the contribution of **Lombardy Region** as part of the project Italia 2050. Center for Research on Italian Art 1950-2050. As part of MA*GA's institutional activity, the exhibition is supported as the main partner by **Ricola, SEA, Missoni, Saporiti Italia**; special partner: **Banca Generali Private**; partner: **Lamberti**; supporter: **Camal - le vie del cotone, Engel & Völkers**.

The exhibition path is completed with the section set up inside the ViaMilanoLounge rooms at Milan Malpensa Airport T1, where emblematic *Janas Code* mural sculptures representing his production can be admired. Rhythmic perpendicular lines evoking the axes of space and time, intersecting to form the grid, these works are created from construction material, given new meaning while preserving their original supporting function.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a monograph published by **Johan & Levi**, containing unpublished material and photographic documentation related to various stages of the project. The volume will be structured as a study and exploration of Michele Ciacciofera's research journey, in dialogue with the institutions collaborating on the project. Different from a traditional catalog, the publication will take the form of a geographic atlas, where theoretical and visual insights trace the stories of the birth of the relationship between man and space in an unprecedented and experimental way.

Biographical Notes

Michele Ciacciofera (Nuoro, 1969; lives and works in Paris).

Michele Ciacciofera's work is characterized by the use of various media, from painting to sculpture, involving ceramics, glass, bronze, stone, and material assemblages, as well as drawing and sound. Through an anthropological approach, the artist explores various themes related to the islands of his origin, Sardinia and Sicily, through the prism of the Mediterranean. Collective memory, reimagined myths, and contemporary political reality blend in works marked by a sensitivity to material and acute awareness of current issues related to the reconfiguration of socio-economic and environmental balances.

Motivated by a constant reflection and research based on numerous sources, Ciacciofera is primarily interested in the subject and its narrative, as well as the sensations he intends to convey through the choice of materials. He constantly draws from his background in political science, his interest in anthropology, archaeology, environmental issues, and his obsession with individual and collective memory to materialize poetic experiences with strong communicative capacity. His works have been exhibited at the 57th International Art Biennale in Venice, Documenta 14 in Kassel and Athens, the

MAN Museum in Nuoro, the CAFA Museum in Beijing, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Rochechouart (France), the Rennes Museum, Summerhall in Edinburgh, the IMMA Museum in Dublin, and numerous other international museum institutions. He received the Civitella Ranieri NYC Foundation Visual Arts Fellowship for 2015-16. Two solo exhibitions are in preparation in France and one in Scotland, two significant public works in France and Italy, and a site-specific work with which he will participate in the VI Contemporary Art Biennial of Mardin in Turkey (May 2024).

Gallarate (VA), November 2023

MICHELE CIACCIOFERA. *CONDENSING THE INFINITE*

Gallarate (VA), MA*GA Museum (via E. De Magri 1)

December 17, 2023 - April 7, 2024

With the support of BUILDING

Opening: Saturday, December 16, 2023, from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM (free admission)

Opening Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday: 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Saturday and Sunday: 11:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Admission:

Full: €7.00; Reduced: €5.00

MA*GA Museum

T +39 0331 706011; info@museomaga.it; www.museomaga.it

Press Office

CLP Relazioni Pubbliche

Anna Defrancesco | T +39 02 36755700 | M 349 6107625 | anna.defrancesco@clp1968.it