

PRESS RELEASE



Michelangelo Pistoletto
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Photo Damiano Andreotti
Courtesy Cittadellarte and Castello di Rivoli
Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli-Torino



Michelangelo Pistoletto
La mela reintegrata (The Reinstated Apple), 2007-2019
Photo Alessandro Lacirasella
Courtesy Cittadellarte

Michelangelo Pistoletto. Molti di uno (Many of One)
curated by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev and Marcella Beccaria
2 November 2023 – 25 February 2024
Manica Lunga
Inauguration: 1 November 2023

Castello di Rivoli presents a major exhibition dedicated to Michelangelo Pistoletto (Biella, 1933) on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday. Set up in the vast spaces of the Manica Lunga wing of the castle, Pistoletto's *Molti di uno* (Many of One) reinvents the linear picture gallery architecture of the Manica Lunga, transforming it into an irregular and free-form urban device through which to collect and reread all his art in a gigantic self-portrait which works like the map of an ideal city of the future.

"Pistoletto is one of the most multifaceted, innovative, creative and visionary figures of contemporary art on a global level," says **Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev**, Director of Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea. "Already active in the second half of the twentieth century, he is capable of reimagining the world in the twenty-first century through his 'formula of creation', in the name of a new 'trinitic' balance between the natural and artificial that he calls the Third Paradise."

Pistoletto is among the artists who have redefined the concept of art since the mid-sixties of the last century through Arte Povera. Already from the first half of the 1950s, the artist questioned the concept of personal

identity and embarked on the path of the self-portrait as an emblematic expression of his thought according to which the individual subject comes to life in relation to others, becoming a plural subject. Since 1962 he has been creating mirror paintings, in which the viewer and the world enter the work. Overcoming the boundaries marked by the purely pictorial dimension represented for Pistoletto the opening to a landscape that overlooks the contemporaneity of existence.

“Designed for the Manica Lunga,” says **Marcella Beccaria**, “*Molti di uno* is a city of art structured as walkable architecture and made up of 29 *Uffizi* (Offices) or rooms. Designed as open and connected spaces, the *Uffizi* include metaverse, art, science, philosophy, law, law, architecture, communication, politics, ecology, surveillance, sports, mathematics, spirituality, religion, mythology, education, nourishment, symbolism, cosmology, design, burial, history, urban planning, fashion, space, writing, health, information technology, nature. The 29 *Uffizi* expose the structure which, according to the artist, is the basis of civil and social life, proposing a vast network of interrelations and a proactive dynamic condition aimed at breaking down walls and separations.”

The 29 *Uffizi* are communicating with each other and interconnected through a series of doors, each bearing the sign of the specific activity on the architrave. The shape of the doors reflects the *Segno Arte* (Sign Art). Conceived by the artist in 1976, the *Segno Arte* is given by the intersection of two triangles, ideally inscribing a human body with arms raised and legs apart. The first concept of an architecture within an architecture dates back to *Porte - Uffizi* (Doors - Uffizi) at the MuHKA - Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen in Antwerp. It stems from the earlier *Le Porte di Palazzo Fabroni* (The Doors of Palazzo Fabroni) created in Pistoia in 1995. Pistoletto used this exhibition device several times since then, but always reflecting a classification that could be given to the society of that moment and simultaneously proposing an ideal city. The division of the city into *Uffizi* takes up a reflection to which the artist has dedicated space in his *La formula della creazione* (The Formula of Creation), 2022, a book in which he examines his own path, identifying 31 steps which, leading to the genesis of a new society, become cardinal points at the basis of the Formula of Creation.

The exhibition will reveal a new participatory work-action in the *Surveillance Uffizio*.

“But this future city is also a city of technology, social media, and artificial intelligence,” says Christov-Bakargiev, “it is a world in which the mirror of constant, invisible and ubiquitous control can lead to the need to reimagine the notion of freedom. What does a world of *homo cellularis* mean, whose minimal gestures are recorded, measured, archived, and indeed extracted for predictive purposes? A technological mirror that can make humans slaves to AI machines, or capable of growing towards false paradises, depending on how responsibly and ethically these tools will be used by our descendants? Pistoletto makes us reflect on this, more than humanly.”

Within the vision of a new ethically responsible community, the exhibition is also a device to involve people, starting from the workers who in various capacities operate within and orbit around the Museum, making it a microcosm of a possible ideal city. Every day, a person equipped with specific knowledge and practice in an area for which one of the 29 *Uffizi* exists will be the responsible catalyst of the day: for example a press officer will be responsible for the *Communication Uffizio*, while the competent doctor could collaborate in a day dedicated to the *Health Uffizio*, just as an Artnaut could lead a day on education, just as a cafeteria manager could follow the day dedicated to the *Nutrition Uffizio*, the gardener could be responsible for the *Ecology Uffizio* and a curator that of the *Art Uffizio*, while a librarian could take care of the day dedicated to the *Writing Uffizio*. In this way the artist revitalizes and reinvents the concept of temporary exhibition and contributes to pragmatically creating a new world based on Democracy.

On the occasion of the exhibition, the spaces of the Library and CRRI Research Institute of Castello di Rivoli are hosting a special reading room dedicated to Michelangelo Pistoletto. The room brings together a wide



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selection of more than 170 publications, books and monographic catalogs tracing the artist's production from his beginnings up to the present.



Michelangelo Pistoletto
Venere degli stracci (Venus of the Rags), 1967
Fondazione per l'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea CRT
on loan to Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli-Torino
Photo Paolo Pellion
Courtesy Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli-Torino

The exhibition is made in collaboration with Cittadellarte



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We also thank the Friend Benefactor Gianfranco D'Amato



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Michelangelo Pistoletto biography



Michelangelo Pistoletto. Photo Pierluigi Di Pietro
Courtesy Cittadellarte

Michelangelo Pistoletto was born in Biella in 1933. He began to exhibit his work in 1955 and in 1960 he had his first solo show at Galleria Galatea in Turin. An inquiry into self-portraiture characterizes his early work. In the two-year period 1961-1962 he made the first *Mirror Paintings*, which directly include the viewer and real time in the work, and open up perspective, reversing the Renaissance perspective that had been closed by the twentieth-century avant-gardes. These works quickly brought Pistoletto international acclaim, leading, in the sixties, to one-man shows in important galleries and museums in Europe and the United States. The *Mirror Paintings* are the foundation of his subsequent artistic output and theoretical thought. In 1965 and 1966 he produced a set of works entitled *Minus Objects*, considered fundamental to the birth of Arte Povera, an art movement of which Pistoletto was an animating force and a key figure. In 1967 he began to work outside traditional exhibition spaces, with the first instances of that “creative collaboration” he developed over the following decades by bringing together artists from different disciplines and diverse sectors of society. In 1975-76 he presented a cycle of twelve consecutive exhibitions, *Le Stanze*, at the Stein Gallery in Turin. This was the first of a series of complex, year-long works called “time continents”. Others are *White Year* (1989) and *Happy Turtle* (1992). In 1978, in a show in Turin, Pistoletto defined two main directions his future art would take: *Division and Multiplication of the Mirror* and *Art Take On Religion*. In the early eighties he made a series of sculptures in rigid polyurethane, translated into marble for his solo show in 1984 at Forte di Belvedere in Florence. From 1985 to 1989 he created the series of “dark” volumes called *Art of Squalor*. During the nineties, with *Project Art* and with the creation in Biella of *Cittadellarte - Fondazione Pistoletto* and the *University of Ideas*, he brought art into active relation with diverse spheres of society with the aim of inspiring and producing responsible social change. In 2003 he won the Venice Biennale’s Golden Lion for Lifelong Achievement. In 2004 the University of Turin awarded him an honorary degree in Political Science. On that occasion, the artist announced what has become the most recent phase of his work, *Third Paradise*. In 2007, in Jerusalem, he received the *Wolf Foundation Prize in the Arts*, “for his constantly inventive

career as an artist, educator and activist whose restless intelligence has created prescient forms of art that contribute to fresh understanding of the world.” In 2010 he wrote the essay *The Third Paradise*, published in Italian, English, French and German. In 2012 he started promoting the *Rebirth-day*, first worldwide day of rebirth, celebrated every year on 21st December with initiatives taking place all around the world. In 2013 the Louvre in Paris hosted his solo exhibition Michelangelo Pistoletto, *année un – le paradis sur terre*. In this same year he received the *Praemium Imperiale* for painting, in Tokyo. In May 2015 he received an honorary degree from the Universidad de las Artes of Havana in Cuba. In the same year he realized a large-scale work called *Rebirth*, situated in the park of the Palais des Nations in Geneva, headquarters of the UN. In 2017 the text written by Michelangelo Pistoletto *Ominitheism and Demopraxy. Manifesto for a regeneration of society* was published. In 2021 the *Universario*, an exhibition space in which the artist presents his most recent research, was inaugurated at Cittadellarte, and in December 2022 his latest book, *La formula della creazione*, in which he retraces the fundamental steps and the evolution of his entire artistic career and theoretical reflection, was published.

To download the press release and images click [here](#)

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