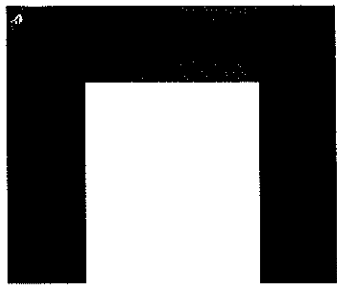


**CASTELLO DI RIVOLI**

**MUSEO D'ARTE CONTEMPORANEA**

Piazza Mafalda di Savoia - 10098 Rivoli (Torino) - Italia  
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<b>Exhibition</b>	<i>New generations. Roberto Cuoghi. Šuillakku</i>
<b>Curator</b>	Marcella Beccaria
<b>Catalogue</b>	Skira, Milan
<b>Press Office</b>	Massimo Melotti, Responsible Manuela Vasco, tel. +39/011.9565209 Silvano Bertalot, tel. +39/011.9565211 fax +39/011.9565231, e-mail: <a href="mailto:press@castellodirivoli.org">press@castellodirivoli.org</a>
<b>Press preview</b>	Monday, May 5, 2008, 11.30 a.m.
<b>Opening</b>	Tuesday, May 6, 2008, 7.00 p.m.
<b>Dates</b>	May 6 – July 27, 2008
<b>Hours</b>	Tuesday → Thursday 10.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. Friday → Sunday, 10.00 a.m. – 9.00 p.m.
<b>Entrance</b>	€ 6.50 full price, € 4.50 reduced price
<b>Location</b>	Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Piazza Mafalda di Savoia – 10098 Rivoli (Turin)
<b>Education services and public programs</b>	Education Department ph. +39/011.9565213 – fax +39/011.9565232 e-mail: <a href="mailto:educa@castellodirivoli.org">educa@castellodirivoli.org</a>
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**PRESS RELEASE**

*New generations. Roberto Cuoghi. Šuillakku*

Curated by Marcella Beccaria

Dates: May 6 – July 27, 2008

With its “New generations” series the Museum showcases the work of young artists who are emerging on the international stage. “New generations,” curated by Marcella Beccaria, began in 2000 and has presented exhibitions dedicated to the work of Franz Ackermann, Teresita Fernández, Anna Gaskell, Francesco Vezzoli, Thomas Demand, Candice Breitz and Yang Fudong.

With this solo exhibition the Museum is presenting the work of Roberto Cuoghi, one of the most interesting Italian artists working today. Born in Modena in 1973, he established his reputation with his ability to create his own language, working with a wide range of techniques, including photography, video, animations, painting, drawing and sound. In particular, Cuoghi has developed a personal investigation of the principle of metamorphosis. At the age of twenty-five he embarked on a path of physical transformation that lasted seven years and led him to age his appearance so he would resemble his father. Refusing to call this process a performance and to execute related works, the artist instead transferred his interest in the idea of metamorphosis into new works. The exhibition at the Castello revolves around Pazuzu, an Assyrian demon, whose iconography also pertains to our present, through different forms and mutations.

Arriving at the Castello, the public is welcomed by a statue of the demon, inspired by an example from the Assyrian era, now in the Louvre in Paris. Thanks to the permission of the prestigious French museum, Cuoghi submitted the ancient little statue, only a few centimeters high, to an elaborate laser scanning process and then created a new sculpture, about six meters high. This work, positioned on the unfinished Juvarrian staircase, greets visitors to Castello di Rivoli. The exhibition continues on the third floor, where the artist has created an imposing sound installation inspired by the lamentations that the ancient Assyrians addressed to their gods, to invoke their protection. The artist composed the sound track and text, using careful research by archeological experts together with his own imagination. Cuoghi has also personally created the sound instruments needed for the composition and the noises it contains. Multiplying and mutating his own voice, the artist transforms himself into a chorus of hundreds of people. The title *Šuillakku* (pronounced “shoe-ee-lah-coo”), chosen by the artist for the exhibition, refers to the choral prayer position, with one hand raised, used in ancient times for invocations; it establishes a hypothetical relationship with the position of the statue of Pazuzu.

“*Šuillakku* - Marcella Beccaria writes – is clearly the most complex project the artist has created to date. Transforming a small Assyrian statue of the demon Pazuzu into a

monumental work, Cuoghi has conceived a talisman on the scale of the Castello.

The work introduces visitors to a lamentation, composed and installed in a way that suggests the uncomfortable feeling of finding oneself in the midst of a ritual gathering of some hundred ancient Assyrians. According to the belief that Evil was capable of driving out other Evil, Pazuzu was the demon that the ancient population evoked when it was afflicted with bad omens. Simultaneously ironic and disturbing, this umpteenth metamorphosis is in perfect harmony with the uncertainty that characterizes the fate of the present time, at a moment when the descent toward new abysses seems to be part of our future."

In conjunction with the exhibition *Šuillakku*, Skira, Milan is publishing an in-depth catalogue on the work of Roberto Cuoghi. The book includes an essay by the curator, complete biographical and bibliographical appendices and images of most of the works the artist has created.

**Press Office Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art**

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## BIOGRAPHY

Roberto Cuoghi was born in Modena in 1973. In 1994 he moved to Milan, where he studied at the Accademia delle Belle Arti di Brera, graduating in 2001. He continues to live and work in Milan.

His first show was *Orizzontale / Verticale* at the Palazzo della Prefettura in Modena. In 1997 he produced a series of drawings entitled *Il Coccodrillo* (self-portraits and texts), which he exhibited the same year in the *Spazio Aperto* cycle at the Galleria Comunale d'Arte Moderna in Bologna. In Viafarini, Milan, he presented a caption-text about the experience of growing his fingernails for eleven months before cutting them off. He contributed to the *Visual Rave* show at Milan's Società Umanitaria by building a sandcastle with the help of his friends.

In 1998 Cuoghi began a seven-year process of physical transformation to assume the appearance of his own father, which involved gaining weight and 'ageing' to the point of being unrecognisable.

In 1999 he participated in *Guarene Arte 99* at the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo. The same year he created *In camera caritatis*, a work which used a computer program to arrange a list of some 6,000 names associated with the contemporary art world.

In 2000 Cuoghi made *The Goodgriefies*, a computer-animated film featuring popular cartoon characters which he altered and deformed. He also took part in a number of group exhibitions, including *Fuori Uso 2000* at the Spazio Lungo Fiume Sud in Pescara and *3nds Milano* at the Spazio Salara in Bologna.

In 2001 he began to work on a series of photographic portraits whose subjects' disfigured features looked as if they had been caught up in a violent brawl. During the same year, his work was exhibited in several important shows, including *Primo piano. Su la testa!* and *Il dono. Offerta, ospitalità, insidia* at the Palazzo delle Papesse Centro Arte Contemporanea in Siena. He also contributed to the first Tirana Biennale in Albania. Cuoghi's work was selected to appear in the exhibition *Espresso. Arte oggi in Italia* at the Manifattura Tabacchi in Florence. The GAMeC Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Bergamo showed his *Friendly Neighbourhood* series, which featured a cartoon version of Andy Warhol.

In 2002 Cuoghi participated in Manifesta 4, the European Biennial of Contemporary Art in Frankfurt, for which he made the video *Foolish Things*, and in *Verso il futuro, identità nell'arte italiana 1990-2002* at the Museo del Corso in Rome. Other exhibitions included: *ExIT. Nuove geografie della creatività italiana* at the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin, and *Nuovo spazio italiano* at the Galleria Civica di Arte Contemporanea, Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, and the Palazzo delle Albe in Trento. The artist also contributed to the video exhibitions *Poliphonix 40* at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, and *VideoRom 4.0* at MACRO in Rome.

In 2003 Cuoghi took part in *Cover Theory. L'arte contemporanea come reinterpretazione* at the Officina della luce (the former Centrale Emilia) in Piacenza, and in *Così va il mondo / Ainsi va le monde. Un regard sur la scène italienne actuelle* at the Espace Paul Ricard in Paris. He was also invited to show *The Goodgriefies* at Apexart in New York. The same year, the Eldorado Project Room at Bergamo's GAMeC Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea dedicated a solo exhibition to the artist, entitled *Roberto Cuoghi. Foolish Things*, which

featured the eponymous video and the installation of plants fitted with motion sensors. Cuoghi had another solo exhibition at the Massimo De Carlo gallery in Milan, which focused on drawings he had made on multi-layered sheets of acetate. He participated in *Great Expectations!* in *Fuoriuso 2003*, Ferrotel, Pescara.

The artist took part in several exhibitions in 2004, including *Paradiso e Inferno* at the Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa in Venice and *Vernice. Sentieri della giovane pittura italiana* at the Villa Manin Centro d'Arte Contemporanea in Passariano. He produced a poster for the *I nuovi mostri* project organised by the Fondazione Trussardi in Milan, and contributed to the exhibition *Dimensione follia. Soggettività, passione ed eccesso nella quotidianità* at the Galleria Civica di Arte Contemporanea in Trento.

In 2005 the artist participated in *Fuori tema. Italian Feeling* at the fourteenth Rome Quadrennial, *I Still Believe in Miracles. Dessins sans papier* at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville in Paris, and *Bidibidibidiboo. Opere dalla Collezione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo*, presented at the ninth Baltic Triennial of International Art held at the Contemporary Art Centre in Vilnius, Lithuania. The artist's sound installation *Mbube* was showcased at the T1 Torino Triennale Tremusei. He created a three-dimensional self-portrait for a show organised by The Wrong Gallery in New York.

In 2006 Cuoghi's song *Mei Gui* was presented at Massimo De Carlo in Milan, and the same work also featured in a solo exhibition at *objectif\_exhibitions* in Antwerp alongside *Mbube*. He was invited to show his series of black paintings at the fourth Berlin Biennial, *Von Mäusen und Menschen / Of Mice and Men*. The same year, he took part in *Villa Jelmini: The Complex of Respect* at the Kunsthalle in Bern, *Egomania* at the Galleria Civica e Palazzina dei Giardini, in Modena, *Panic Room. Works from the Dakis Joannou Collection* at the Deste Foundation in Athens, *Elettroshock*, at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing, *Biennale Cuvée*, at the OK Centrum für Gegenwartskunst, Linz, Austria, and finally in *A Secret Service* at the Hayward Gallery in London.

In 2007 Cuoghi participated in *Dalla terra alla luna. Metafore di Viaggio* at the Castello di Rivoli in Turin. *Mei Gui* was presented in a solo exhibition held by the Centre international d'art et du paysage de l'île de Vassivière, France. The group show *Sequence 1. Pittura e scultura nella collezione François Pinault* at Palazzo Grassi in Venice featured a new series by the artist depicting topographies of countries not politically aligned to the West, represented on sheets of glass and acetate. Cuoghi's work was also included in *Où? Scènes du Sud: Espagne, Italie, Portugal*, at the Carré d'Art Musée d'Art Contemporain in Nîmes (France), in *Silenzio. Una mostra da ascoltare* at the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, in *Mentalgrafie. Viaggio nell'arte contemporanea italiana* at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art and in *Fractured Figures. Works from the Dakis Joannou Collection* at the Deste Foundation, Athens.