

Beat: Arts

MARIO MERZ IGLOOS To Be Displayed Over Pirelli HangarBicocca s 5,500 - Sqm Site

25 October 2018 - 24 February 2019

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USPA NEWS - Pirelli HangarBicocca presents "Igloos" (25 October 2018 - 24 February 2019), a show by Mario Merz (Milan, 1925-2003), bringing together his Most Iconic Group of Works : the Igloos, dating from 1968 until the End of his Life. Curated by Vicente Todolí, Artistic Director of Pirelli HangarBicocca and realised in Collaboration with Fondazione Merz, the Exhibition spans the Whole 5,500 Square Metres of the Navate and the Cuboof Pirelli HangarBicocca, placing the Visitor at the Heart of a Constellation of over 30 Large-Scale Works in the Shape of an Igloo : an Unprecedented Landscape of Great Visual Impact.

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Fifty Years since the Creation of the First Igloo, the Exhibition provides an Overview of Mario Merz's Work, of its Historical Importance and Great Innovative Reach. Gathered from Numerous Private Collections and International Museums, including the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid, the Tate Modern in London, the Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin and the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, the "Igloos" will be displayed Together in such a Large Number for the First Time.

The Milan Project builds on Szeemann and Merz's Intention, highlighting how the Artist continued to develop his Igloo Imagery with Coherence and Vision. The Exhibition in fact also includes Works conceived over the Following Decades, on the Occasion of his Major Anthological and Retrospective Shows in the Leading Museums in Europe and around the World. The Show opens with La Goccia d'Acqua, 1987, Twelve Meters in Diameter, it is the Largest Igloo ever produced by Merz for an Internal Exhibition Space, and was conceived on the Occasion of his Solo Show at the CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain de Bordeaux.

In the Space of the Navate, the Exhibition Itinerary unfolds through sets Displayed in Chronological Order, starting from the First Igloos conceived in the '60s such as, to name but a few : Igloo Di Giap, 1968, and Acqua Scivola, 1969. Among those of the '70s, Igloo Di Marisa, 1972 and "If the hoar frost grip thy tent Thou wilt give Thanks when Night is spent" (Ezra Pound), 1978 are featured here. The Evolutions of the '80s, the Period in which the Igloos become more Complex, Doubling, Tripling or Intersecting, are represented by Works such as : Igloo Del Palacio De Las Alhajas, 1982 and Chiaro Oscuro, 1983. Representative of the '90s is the Senza titolo, 1999, created for the Museum Park on the Occasion of the Solo Show at the Fundação de Serralves, also curated by Vicente Todolí.

Through this Group of Works, the Exhibition reveals the Most Innovative Aspects and Themes of Merz's Research, inserting it within the International Contemporary Artistic Panorama of the last 50 Years, through the Use of Natural and Industrial Materials, the Poetic and Evocative Deployment of the Written Word and the Dialog with the Surrounding Space and Architecture.

Mario Merz's Practice developed in Turin from the '50s onwards. A Key Figure of Arte Povera, he was one of the Very First in Italy to use the Installation Medium, breaking through the Two-Dimensional Nature of the Picture by including Neon Tubes in his Canvases and in Everyday Objects, such as Umbrellas and Glasses.

Through his Work, he investigates and represents the Processes of Transformation of Nature and Human Life, using Elements from the Scientific-Mathematical Field, such as the Spiral and the Fibonacci Sequence, and, from 1968, introducing what would remain one of the Recurring and Most Representative Motifs of his Practice for more than 30 Years : the Igloo.

These Works, Visually Traceable to Primordial Habitations, become for the Artist the Archetype of Inhabited Places and of the World, as well as a Metaphor for the Various Relationships between Interior and Exterior, between Physical and Conceptual Space, between Individuality and Collectivity. His Igloos are characterized by a Metallic Structure coated in a Great Variety of Common Materials, such

as Clay, Glass, Stone, Jute, and Steel“”often leaning or intertwined in an Unstable Fashion“”and by the Use of Neon Elements and Wording.

The Delicate Precariousness of these Installations takes on Major Symbolic Importance, sometimes a Political One, opening up to the Artist’s Reflection on Contemporary Living, as Merz himself states: “the Igloo is a Home, a Temporary Shelter. Since I consider that ultimately, today, we live in a Very Temporary Era, for me the Sense of the Temporary coincides with this name : Igloo“^[?] (Mario Merz, taken from “In Prima Persona. Pittori e scultori italiani : Mario Merz, Giulio Paolini, Mimmo Spadini, Alighiero Boetti“^[?] by Antonia Mulas, broadcast on RAI Tre on 12/25/1984).

The Show will be accompanied by a Catalog, published by Mousse Publishing, featuring Detailed Photographic Documentation of the Exhibition, as well as Contributions from Germano Celant, Lisa Le Feuvre and Pietro Rigolo, and Detailed Entries on all the Works on Display.

* Photos : Courtesy Fondazione Merz, Turin, © Silvio Scafoletti - © Paolo Mussat Sartor - © Paolo Pellion

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Ruby BIRD

<http://www.portfolio.uspa24.com/>

Yasmina BEDDOU

<http://www.yasmina-beddou.uspa24.com/>

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.

3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168

Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA

(702) 943.0321 Local

(702) 943.0233 Facsimile

info@unitedpressassociation.org

info@gna24.com

www.gna24.com