

MARIO MERZ

Galleria Christian Stein
Milan, Corso Monforte 23

May 19 – September 16, 2022

Galleria Christian Stein is happy to announce the *Mario Merz* exhibition, running from May 19 to September 16, 2022 at Corso Monforte 23 in Milan. The event is a tribute to the Italian artist (1925–2003) and to his bond with this gallery, which dates back to his participation in a collective in 1967 and developed through no fewer than 33 other occasions, including 12 solo exhibitions.

The gallery hosts a reenactment of an exhibition that took place here in 1999. The original exhibition design, jointly conceived with the artist, will thus again invite the viewer to reflect on the fragile boundary between nature and culture. For Merz, the former reveals itself in mathematical laws, while the latter is generated as we grapple with satisfying our material and spiritual needs.

One symbol is the glass table composed of three sections spiraling through the gallery. Its form evokes a composite golden ratio while its fare—the wine filling one of the five vessels on the table—represents Dionysian nectar, one of humanity's oldest products, embodying our yearning for pleasure and abandonment.

On the walls a sequence of animal profiles—shadows of greyhounds, or perhaps horses or dinosaurs, phantasmatic, unrecognizable forms—challenges our desire to classify. Against the deep black fields of their bodies, neon lights present the Fibonacci numbers, progressively connecting one silhouette to the next: 1,1,2,3,5,8,13...

Laura Cherubini, commenting on the 1999 exhibition, observed that these forms were “neither futuristic nor ancient—or perhaps the two things together.”

(*Liberal*, n. 52, anno 2, n. 8, 4 marzo 1999, p. 75)

These archetypes elude any prior discourse: they always spring from contemporary urges that are perceived, filtered, and presented to the observer through the artist's idiomatic lens. Merz's oeuvre thus inhabits a borderland oscillating continuously between absolute and contingency, personal and social, which makes the work a potential occasion for political engagement, something that renews itself and again speaks a contemporary idiom.

Following those of Michelangelo Pistoletto and Marco Bagnoli, the Mario Merz exhibition is part of an exhibition program that seeks to focus attention, in this period of transition, on the relevance and potentials of liminal zones, interpreted by the artists both from a physical and perceptual point of view and also spiritually, socially, and politically.

Milan, Corso Monforte 23

Monday to Friday 10am–7pm; Saturday 10am–1pm and 3pm–7pm

Info: Tel. (+39) 02-76393301

info@galleriachristianstein.com www.galleriachristianstein.com