



PRESS RELEASE

MATS BERGQUIST
REST

San Fedele Gallery, Milan, from October 27th to December 19th 2018

Curated by Bruno Corà and Andrea Dall'Asta SJ

Opening Friday 26th October 2018 at 6:30 pm.

The **Swedish artist Mats Bergquist** will be the protagonist of the next expositive season of the San Fedele Gallery in a personal exhibit from October 27th to December 19th 2018.

Bergquist starts from wooden supports and with a long process made of iper thin stratifications of materials he gains volumes which are presented as concave or convex surfaces. The physical consistency of the work is therefore due to a **slow and progressive gesture of material superimposition** (glues, chalk, pigments and encausting painting on wood first, and later on canvas), until **the plane of the object results smooth and perfectly polished**. The surface doesn't show any kind of sign, of imitative or naturalistic forms. At a first impression they are "vacuum" spaces.

Other times we find the presence of objects that reveal themselves through **highly symbolic shapes** such as eggs, in this case obtained through the old Japanese technique called *raku*. His sculptures, ordered following strict positions whose rule remains unknown to us, assume a perfect equilibrium and a deep harmony, in a continuous **dialectic between dispersion and rejoining**. Time appears as protagonist. **The work arises from a progressive layering of materials as in antique icons**. The wooden support, with its accurate smoothing, with the subsequent superimposition of the linen cloth as a balance for the movements of the wood, with the chalk coat over which the drawing is engraved, with the application of the golden bottom, with the coat of the colours obtained by mineral and vegetal pigments, was a stage of a process that, after the definition of the contours, ended with the highlightings. It was a **real and genuine path** that marked not only a temporal itinerary of gestures, but also a **journey of the soul which gradually recognized the appearing of the eternal**, as if the divine emerged from the inside of the icon and invaded the here and now of our history.





If the theology of the icon lets the light shine through, as presence of the divine that illuminates and transfigures every human reality, **also Bergquist's work seems to melt with the light**. Contemplating those images without images, we stay still, in the silence, as if the surface unveiled a promise of a revelation, as if they were curtains, veils or diaphragms ready to disclose.

In this case the reference seems to be the supremacist **Kazimir Malevich** in his aim to realise the icons of his contemporary time, drawing on the heart of Russian spirituality. In front of the Swedish artist's works, how not to remember the white square on the black back-ground? **Black and white**: the two colours that for the Russian artist represent the maximum of the chromatic tension. In Bergquist black and white, instead of superimposing, seem to recall each other, **as if one could not exist without the other**. If black and white are for Malevich the colours related to shape and energy, for Bergquist the two colours rather seem to meet in the light that radiates and spreads from the perfectly polished surfaces. So, if black is the reference to the Earth that opens up to the divine, white, as in the antique Asiatic icons, is an emanation itself of God, which we leave our footprints on, as when we walk in the snow.

Thanks to **as refined as sophisticated technique**, the light doesn't seem to be painted, but instead to be grabbed or better fixed directly to the support as if it was attracted by the surface to spread itself all over the space. Bergquist's work seems therefore **a wonderful reflection on a light that must be contemplated in a sidereal silence**, because we can dive into the light, live and sink in it. Hence, it is a work about the transcendence of light and its capacity to enter our lives.

**The exhibition will be inaugurated Friday oct. 26th at 6:30 pm
at San Fedele Gallery in presence of the artist and the curators**

San Fedele Gallery

from Oct. 27th to Dec. 19th, 2018

Thursday – Saturday 4/7 pm

in the mornings by appointment, holidays closed

free entry





For information
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Attached images

Vintersaga, encaustic, 125cm X 100cm, 2017-2018 Pic by Leif Mattsson

Vintersaga (bis), encaustic, 37cm X 30cm, 2017-2018 Pic by Leif Mattsson

Niente, brass, 1/3, full scale, 2016 Pic by Peter Classon

Iconostasi carbazol, encaustic, variable measures, 2016-2017 Pic by Peter Classon

