

ARCHEOLOGY OF MIND

Curator Luigi Fassi

Archeology of Mind is an exhibition project consisting exclusively of works from the Fondazione Morra Greco Collection in Naples. Curatorial focus on a collection that has gradually been built up over the years naturally tends to be characterised by a recondite and wavering interpretative quality, which is open to many forms of interpretations, all of which start out from the past. Right from the outset, the possibility of presenting a tour through a collection is an exercise that is essentially archeological and encyclopaedic. It is one in which all recognition of the contemporary world, of anticipation and prescience, necessarily starts out from the past – from the moment the works were made and subsequently collected. Moving away from this inevitable starting point, as though in ever-expanding circles, towards a broader view of the theme, Archeology of Mind focuses on the works in the Morra Greco collection by artists who have brought to the fore their idea of traditionalism and archeology. Each one ushers in their own particular canons, and these are motivated by the proposition of a narrative, a self portrait, or a conceptual operation, in which the main ingredient is that of the dimension achieved by a plunge into time. It is one of historical otherness and a chronological shift away from their own present. In the works of these artists, the constant relationship of continuity and severance between contemporaneity and past, between the present and a focus on antiquity, creates a path of mental archeology. This is built up by working on private reminiscences of the past in Gothic, backward-looking terms, but also with visionary views, close to a dream-world dimension and the intellectual fascination of violence. The paradoxical nature of this orientation lies in the fact that it introduces an unusual and unexpected equation between the speed of the present day, in which the works have been made, and the indecipherability of the historical age in which they appear to be set. It is precisely the temporal gap – the dimension of differences and temporal unrecognisability in the artists' works – that becomes the detonator of meaning, overtones and interpretations. By turning their attention to a past that is concrete, visionary or even only suggested, these works reveal the potential for understanding the present by starting out from the dimension of a purely private and personal mental archaism.

Archeology of Mind thus stops to consider the proactive idea of an ethical and cerebral historicism in the work of a whole range of artists and in contemporary works themselves, suggesting a possible area of research in international art over the past ten years. However uncertainly delineated a reformulation of the past may be in many cases, it does indicate a new way of working in the present, as though contemporary time might shine with the suppressed light of a time that has been effaced.

With an ear to memory and an eye to a vision that looks to the past, an apparent lack of present-day relevance in many of the works is actually a conscious means to investigate reality and contemporaneity by starting out from concealed, subterranean perspectives that are both unpredictable and neglected. Such conscious outdatedness appears to bring to the surface the most prolific ideas that, within the history of European thinking, have helped bring about a revolutionary and innovative approach to historicising tradition. In particular, the possibility of a freely creative and outdated use of the past – which is here seen as a place of mythologically positive power – refers back to Friedrich Nietzsche's intuitions concerning the usefulness of a personal mental archeology that mediates between past and future, giving new impetus to the present. In the second of his *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen* (Untimely Meditations) "On the Use and Abuse of History for Life", Nietzsche denounces the philosophical need to put an end to the antiquarian cult of history as an erudite custom that was an end in itself, as the oppressive and suffocating accumulation of useless, forgotten materials. In this rapid and dazzling essay, the German philosopher, far from unilaterally condemning historical knowledge, does however urge us to take the positive aspects and dynamism of history in

newest retro.

Maurizio Morra Greco

How is history now. What is it?

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All forms similar: Platon

dance...

order to better augment the plastic force of life - in other words, Man's ability to move forward freely, renewing himself and his ideas in perfect contemplation of the great models of the past. Nietzsche's peroration is concerned with safeguarding Man's "longing to experiment", preserving it from Europe's all-devouring and sterile cult of the past, with no links to Man's own life and interests. Past events that are gathered together by monumental history must exist only for the benefit of dynamic expansion of the present time, taking inspiration and momentum from the creative grandeur of the past. While history is not to be approached as an aseptic science and as the modification of life, ancient examples that prompt innovation and the exploration of uncharted territories filled with new stimuli are however to be encouraged. This Nietzschean image of the past as a place of mythologically positive power, which can be retrieved in order to provide an authentic drive towards the present and the future, restores the meaning of a creative use of the past and of its inspiration. And it is Nietzsche himself who, indirectly, suggests the hypothesis of a personal and mental archeology that mediates between past and future, between knowledge and volition.

⊗ NO

⊗ NO!

critical history absent!

Taking up this perspective, Archeology of Mind is a journey through the cracks, created out of details and unclassifiable atmospheres, obscure references and indefinite mediations. Like a voyage of the mind, an imaginary *itinerarium mentis in Deum*, the journey traced out by the works in the exhibition appears intent on preserving the memory of unknown and past events. It is like an arcane and mysterious *memento mori*, which recreates an archaic and ancestral image from which, to use the words of Nietzsche once again, emerge "images of myth as diabolic custodians, as tutelary deities under whose watchful eyes the young soul grows".

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All forms
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CWyn Evans

Baldessari

dot guy?

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7003
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hummed

Schimmel → Bourgeois and V

Richard

So2 Bück → pop music
like a punk ad...

Rodney Guba → Jan. Cage 1994

prequel paintings → other f
art show