

Press Release: Gianni Politi - “Bodybuilding”

March 24 – May 19, 2018

Opening Reception: Friday, March 23, 7–9PM

“Politi’s brush strokes conjure everything from Abstract Expressionist scumbling to Tiepolo-like sunsets.” (Roberta Smith, New York Times)

McNamara Art Projects and Galleria Lorcan O’Neill, Rome, are pleased to present *Bodybuilding*, the first show by Italian artist Gianni Politi in Hong Kong, featuring a series of newly developed abstract paintings made using scraps of canvas with acrylic, oil and household paint and a series of portraits on canvas.

Politi’s abstract paintings typically expose the process the artist uses to move from a body of work to the next, employing the materials that were discarded from previous works to re-evaluate the dignity of new work, which was temporarily left behind in the process of selection and creation. Everything that happens in the studio matters for Politi. His work centres precisely on the struggle of the artist in his tension to move toward the finished work and the invention of new forms of expression; his art facilitates the foundation of this process.

It does so while being deeply indebted to Italian tradition: abstract forms become references to modern Italian art, freely interpreted and transfigured. Like Burri, Politi’s methods are unconventional and make use of sparse resources. He recycles materials, including industrial and commercial canvas, he creates abstract collage constructions made from torn cloth, roughly glued together and stretched across the canvas. In conjunction with this, Politi’s larger sized abstract canvases seem to create an innovative bridge between Abstract Expressionism and Twentieth-century Italian masters; this reference is being established between Politi’s use of colour, predominantly referring to Italian archival paintings of the 16th and 17th centuries, and the re-evaluation of these aspects in a fluid and abstracted form language.

Politi’s portraits on the other hand explore tradition through the theme of memory: these oil paintings on canvas measuring 24 x 18 cm, derive from a process of mental reconstruction, starting from the study of a 1770 portrait by Gaetano Gandolfi. The original portrait shows the face of a bearded man that reminded Politi of his father who died aged 78 when the artist was just 16 years old. What emerged from this catalyst encounter was an enquiry into memory and the faint trace of a father’s face and a parallel exercise of painting using different techniques, colours, degrees of fidelity or abstraction.

Painting, destruction and recreation are essential aspects in the vocabulary of Gianni Politi’s oeuvre, they are the tools Politi employs to bring an abstracted trace of the sentiment that permeates the studio during his hours of creative production, onto the canvas. Gianni Politi has been exhibited in institutional spaces as Galleria Nazionale d’Arte Moderna, Rome (2014); Nomas Foundation, Rome (2015); MAXXI Museum, Rome (2015).

Notes to the Editor:

Gianni Politi

Gianni Politi (b. 1986 Rome, Italy) currently lives and works in Rome. Politi has exhibited in institutional spaces as Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome (2014); Nomas Foundation, Rome (2015); MAXXI Museum, Rome (2015). *Bodybuilding* is his first exhibition in Hong Kong, organized by McNamara Art Projects in collaboration with Galleria Lorcan O'Neill.

McNamara Art Projects

McNamara Art Projects is an independent art consultancy and curatorial body founded in 2015. Their newly established 3,500sqft project space in Wong Chuk Hang creates a platform committed to showcasing dynamic and cutting edge, emerging as well as established Western and Asian artists in Hong Kong.

The art programme for the project space will take the form of collaborations with significant Western and Asian galleries who do not have a physical presence in Hong Kong, by bringing a diverse range of art that would not otherwise be shown in the city. The aim is to create deeper engagement between the people of Hong Kong and contemporary art. Future exhibitions include collaborations with Urano Gallery, Tokyo, showcasing figurative paintings by Toshiyuki Konishi.

McNamara Art Projects also provides guidance in shaping public and private collections across the Asia region, with a focus on Western modern and contemporary art. Their previous public programmes included the critically acclaimed retrospective of British sculptor Lynn Chadwick (2016), and the exhibition Les Lalannes during Art Basel Hong Kong 2017 in collaboration with Hong Kong Land.

新闻发布

GIANNI POLITI – 《形体建构》

开幕酒会：2017年3月23日（星期五）晚上7时至9时

“从抽象表现主义的色彩技法，到俨如Tiepolo风格的日落，Politi的笔触变奏无限。”

（纽约时报艺评人Roberta Smith）

McNamara Art Projects 及Galleria Lorcan O'Neill Roma隆重呈献意大利艺术家 Gianni Politi的展览《形体建构》（*Bodybuilding*），这是Politi在亚洲的首个展览，展出作品包括艺术家利用画布碎片、压克力颜料、油画颜料和家用油漆最新创作的一系列抽象画，以及其他肖像画。

Politi的抽象画揭示了他如何从一种作业形体过度往另一种作业形体的过程。利用旧作品的剩余废弃材料，艺术家重新审视新作品的身份，评估昔日创作和选材过程中一度被遗忘的价值。Politi认为工作室里发生的一切都值得重视，其作品明确地呈现他在渴求完成作品与创造新型表现方式之间的张力和种种挣扎，此过程的诞生乃是源于他的艺术观。

事实上，Politi深受意大利传统影响：意大利现代艺术如同幻化成抽象形式，只是演绎手法和形态更不受约束。像另一位意大利艺术家Burri一样，Politi喜用零落的资源实践非传统方法：他会回收工业用和商业用帆布等不同材料，并粗糙地把碎步粘合然后在画布上铺开，形成抽象拼贴画结构。此外，Politi的大尺寸抽象画又似乎以别开生面的方式连结了抽象表现主义艺术家与二十世纪意大利艺术大师，这一说法建基于Politi的色彩运用概念，对十六和十七世纪意大利重要绘画的显著参照，以及他以流畅和抽象语言对这些方面重新评估。

另一方面，Politi的肖像画以回忆为题探索传统，一批24×18厘米的油画衍生自一场精神重构过程。Politi一开始对Gaetano Gandolfi在1770年所作的肖像画进行研究，该作品所描绘的有胡子的男人使Politi想起在他仅16岁时离世的父亲，当时他父亲已78岁。一张模糊的父亲的脸和一场回忆探索旅程，让艺术家决心以不同技巧、颜色以及精确或抽象程度，开展一系列平行创作练习。

在Gianni Politi的作品中，涂绘、破坏和重现是必不可少的范畴。艺术家以这些手法捕捉创作过程焕发的、散落在工作室里抽象而微弱的情感，并在画布上转化呈现。

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