

CAPOGROSSI

DIETRO LE QUINTE

curated by Francesca Romana Morelli

Press preview

Tuesday, September 20, 2022
12.00

Opening

Tuesday, September 20, 2022
18.00

Opening to the public

September 21
— November 6, 2022

The 50th anniversary of the death of Giuseppe Capogrossi (Rome, 7 March 1900 - 9 October 1972) offers an important occasion to celebrate one of the fathers of informal painting and 20th century Italian art. On 20 September, the **Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea** will open a major exhibition entitled **Capogrossi. Dietro le quinte**, curated by Francesca Romana Morelli and realised in collaboration with the **Fondazione Archivio Capogrossi** with the support by **Ghella** and **UniCredit**. The exhibition at the Galleria Nazionale brings the artist's work back to Rome after more than 20 years. It kicks off a series of initiatives that pay tribute to the artist on the occasion of the anniversary within a context of a structured project entitled *Capogrossi. Il segno nei musei e nelle istituzioni italiane*, at the instigation of the Guglielmo Capogrossi Foundation.

At the 1954 Venice Biennial Capogrossi is present with a memorable solo room: Giulio Carlo Argan, convinced that art is an "act of consciousness," after visiting the exhibition wrote privately to the artist "Among today's painters you are one of the few who are much more concerned with the form than with the painting; and they realize that, in order to save the former, it may be necessary and still makes allowances for sacrificing the latter (...) Therefore I think that your position, even if someone may judge it obstinately secluded and abstractly contemplative, is generous and humane. (...) It is always a pleasure to find in the painting of a friend his most authentic moral qualities; and of this, of nothing else...".

On display are a selection of **more than 30 paintings and some 20 works on paper** from the collections of the Galleria Nazionale, home to the artist's most conspicuous body of work, as well as from the Capogrossi Archive Foundation and private collections. Complementing the exhibition are archival documents from the artist's documentary holdings preserved in the Gallery Archives and at the Foundation, such as photographic portraits of Capogrossi with prominent figures of the time, exhibition catalogues, magazines, letters and newspaper articles, which reconstruct the relationships forged by the artist.

As curator Francesca Romana Morelli points out, “*the exhibition is an excursus intended to establish a close dialogue between the artist’s first painting season, culminating in the tonal period, and the later phase. In this respect the works function like the pieces of a puzzle, which once fitted together, without following a chronological order but rather assonances in compositional structure, make visible the authentic saturnine physiognomy of the artist, who since the 1930s, has been filtering his painting with a logic and mental rigor that has shown how he has always been listening to himself and in constant observation of the outside world, staying off established routes.*”

Among the works on display are a selection of paintings that have not been exhibited for a long time, such as the iconic *Superficie 274* (1954) and *Autoritratto con Emanuele Cavalli* (c. 1927), in which the artist doubles himself through a portrait of his companion Emanuele Cavalli, who pops out from behind his back. Or *Paesaggio invernale* (1935), taken from the terrace at the top of a building in Prati, where Capogrossi had his studio, but also intended as a pure and desolate staging of human life (owned by UniCredit). Also, an extraordinary *Superficie 76 bis* (1954-1958) whose signs are arranged in an articulated manner, creating empty spaces that play a decisive role in the compositional structure; the essential and enigmatic *Superficie 538* (1961), characterised by a black plane that hinges on relationships and forces at work in space, enhanced by the properties of colour and by subtle degrees of luminosity and opacity of black pigments, interrupted diagonally by a white slit, on which the combination of black signs and larger orange ones exerts a dynamic force.

Finally, an imposing vertical *marouflage, Superficie 419* (ca. 1950), whose two-dimensional character is accentuated by a grid on which the large signs rest, imposing an order on the smaller signs, and *Superficie 106* (1954) an oval-shaped work, intended by the artist as a continuous form, which contains within it a compositional structure in search of a connection with the visual-sound dimension of the external space. These last two works belonged to the famous architects Luigi Moretti and Vincenzo and Edoardo Monaco, who played a decisive role in Capogrossi’s artistic and human story. The exhibition itinerary is enriched by a room that displays works with an oval format and another one filled with white *Rilievi*, conceived by the artist in the 1960s, which demonstrate his inexhaustible will to experiment. Not least is the large tapestry *Astratto* (1963), designed for the ocean liner Michelangelo.

The exhibition at the Galleria Nazionale inaugurates a program of events on the anniversary of Capogrossi’s death, which will continue from October with an exhibition spread across Italy, a section curated by Patrizia Rosazza Ferraris. This consists of about 25 Italian museums and institutions that hold works by Capogrossi in their collections and will join the initiative. Each institution will participate by highlighting its works through meetings, lectures, workshops.

Ghella is a leading global player in the field of large-scale civil work construction. It believes in the value of culture and therefore has always invested in the development of creativity and critical thinking. Guided by both heart and social responsibility, it supports an idea of business intent on leaving a better world to the future generations.

UniCredit is the official sponsor of the initiative. Aware of the value of culture in its different forms as an engine of social, economic and sustainable development of our communities, UniCredit is also committed to supporting it through selected partnerships with high-profile initiatives. By enriching them with loans of works from its own collection, as in the case of this exhibition, it pursues the aim of making its artistic heritage fully accessible to an increasingly wider audience. A digital initiative is also planned to be launched in the coming months that will provide virtual access to the bank’s art collection.

Public information

**Galleria Nazionale d'Arte
Moderna e Contemporanea**

viale delle Belle Arti 131
Roma

Accessible Entrance
via Gramsci 71

Opening Hours

Tuesday to Sunday

9am – 7pm

last entrance 45 minutes
before closing

Tickets

full price: € 10,00

reduced: € 5,00 | € 2,00

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Press Info

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