

PAULA SEEGY

GALLERY

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Via San Maurizio, 14 – Milan

SALVATORE CUSCHERA A TUTTO TONDO

curated by Luigi Sansone

March 21st – April 25th, 2024

opening Thursday, March 21st, at 6 PM

artist and curator in attendance

press release, 03/07/2024

The **Paula Seegy Gallery** is hosting a solo exhibition by the internationally renowned sculptor **Salvatore Cuschera**, who recently returned to Italy after a long stay in the United Kingdom. The exhibition, titled "Salvatore Cuschera a tutto tondo" curated by Luigi Sansone, will be on view from **March 21st to April 25th** and features a selection of 40 medium and small-scale works, including wall pieces and installations, predominantly **unpublished**, all **created in the last decade**, which illustrate key themes of his artistic poetics and journey.

Cuschera thoroughly explores nature and its elements, often focusing on the exaltation of opposites: light and shadow, fullness and emptiness, open and closed spaces, which become indispensable aspects of his research. The use of iron, a material preferred by Cuschera, yields sculptures distinguished by purity of lines, balance, harmonic rhythms, and the presence of geometric shapes. These characteristics also recur in works made of wood, ceramics, fabric, and paper.

The profound visual impact and strong poetic charge generated by these works are tied to the meticulousness and rigor in working materials such as iron, which, despite its hardness and limited malleability, is bent, forged, and curved, sometimes appearing lightweight. Curator Luigi Sansone asserts: *"Behind Cuschera's work there is thought, method, craftsmanship (today very rare: his welds in iron, almost invisible, are extraordinary for their precision), but above all an unconditional love for the profession of blacksmith-sculptor. His work is a synthesis of primordial strength, classical beauty, and a spirit of modernity: it is an impulse towards new horizons, where the plastic art of the past and that of the present merge to give new impetus to human creativity."*

Among the sculptures exhibited such as *Travel 1* (2019), *The Poetry of Structure 2* (2020), *The Poetry of Structure 3* (2020), *Nomad Movement* (2021), crafted in forged and patinated iron, the relationship with the surrounding space and the dialogue established with the place in which they are inserted emerge prominently. The relationship between solids and voids is important, where the reception of light creates interesting interplays with shadows and a sense of continuity between interior and exterior, a concept well represented by *Air Void* (2022) and *Metis* (2016).

The wall compositions are characterized by lengthy processes of cutting, bending, welding, and patinating. There is particular emphasis on regular and irregular geometric figures, as well as their overlapping, where the artist highlights certain parts through color interventions. This can be observed in works such as *Little Theatre: Scene 1* (2019), *Little Theatre: Scene 2* (2022), and *Tearing Apart Space* (2020).

The circle is a recurring element in Cuschera's sculptures, as it is a favored shape and symbolizes perfection, continuity, and eternity. In *Rhapsody in Blue 2* (2023), the circle, also chromatically highlighted by the color blue, seems to contain the forces of the polygons inserted within it, which push outward.

Wavy and vibrant forms characterize instead the installation *Seven Sisters* (2018), composed of seven pieces, which refer to the cliffs overlooking the English Channel. The sheets evoke the waves and their rhythm, while the elements rising from them have anthropomorphic shapes that, placed at the center of each composition, seem to function as *genii loci*, guardians, witnesses of an ancestral world in which human beings and nature were once in symbiosis.

Within the exhibition path, there are also **unpublished** wall works in fabric, a material with which the artist experimented following a journey to Senegal and Mali. Entitled "*Between Heaven and Earth: Impressions on Bogolan*", this series from 2009 is inspired by African 'bògòlanfini', with Cuschera reworking the production process through mechanical stitching, later intervening with color. The result is a message of joy, a kind of hymn to life.

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication in Italian and English with critical text by Luigi Sansone and a rich repertoire of images.

Biographical Notes

Salvatore Cuschera was born in Scarlino, in the province of Grosseto, in 1958. He graduated in sculpture from the Academy of Fine Arts of Brera, always in Milan, and since 1990 he began exhibiting his works in collective and solo exhibitions. He made his first trip to Greece, where he visited Crete and its museums, studying Greek sculpture and Minoan-Mycenaean art in depth. He then embarked on a journey to the Netherlands and Germany, where he came into contact with the works of Bauhaus artists and deepened his knowledge of Russian constructivism. Back in Italy, he created his first sculptures in colored iron, a synthesis of his interest in painting, sculpture, and architecture, and participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions. In Gibellina, he participated in the "Atelier del Mediterraneo" with Markus Lüpertz, an event curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, and in 1992, thanks to Pietro Consagra, he created his first public sculpture for the Municipality of Gibellina. He has won several awards and participated in important group exhibitions, including the XIV Rome Quadriennale d'Arte. In 2011, at the 54th Venice Biennale, he was present with an installation in the gardens of the Arsenale and for the Faenza Prize at the MIC - International Museum of Ceramics. In 2018, two sculptures by the artist were chosen to be exhibited at the Farnesina, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome. In the same year, a monographic book edited by Giuseppe Appella was published by Silvana Editoriale. In 2019, he created three large sculptures for the park of the Farleys House & Gallery Foundation, 'Home of the Surrealists', in Chiddingfold, East Sussex, UK. In 2022, one of his sculptures was included in an exhibition project at the Horti of the Collegio Borromeo in Pavia. Recently, he was invited to participate in a group exhibition at the National Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rome. His works are permanently housed in public and private collections, including in Italy, the Museo del Novecento in Milan, the MUSMA in Matera, and the public space of Gibellina. Currently, he lives and works between Italy and the United Kingdom.

Exhibition Details

Title Salvatore Cuschera A tutto tondo

Curated by Luigi Sansone

Venue Paula Seegy Gallery, via San Maurizio 14 - Milan

Dates March 21 – April 25, 2024

Opening Thursday, March 21, at 6:00 PM - with remarks by Luigi Sansone at 6:30 PM

Hours Tuesday to Saturday, 12:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Admission Free

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