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GIUSEPPE PENONE
Curated by Gianfranco Maraniello

MAMbo, Museo d'Arte Moderna of Bologna
25 September - 8 December 2008

Throughout the autumn of 2008, MAMbo - Museo d'Arte Moderna of Bologna, will be delighted to host *Giuseppe Penone*, curated by Gianfranco Maraniello, one of the most articulated and complete exhibitions dedicated to the Piedmont artist.

The project of this exhibition was entirely conceived in relation to the spaces of the museum. It presents a wide selection of works belonging to major series in the master's career and a number of new works never before shown of which "Scrigno" opens the exhibitory itinerary. "Scrigno" is composed of a bronze element and forty-two elements in leather. The installation shares the "reflection upon the practice of sculpture" common to all of Penone's preceding production.

The exhibition goes beyond the concept of a retrospective. It was the intention of the artist himself and of the curator to show the works as part of an evolving discourse and not as the elements of a chronological sequence. The series of "Alberi" exhibited in MAMbo's "Manica Lunga" is explanatory of such an approach. This series was conceived in 1969. Penone's intention was to "re-discover the trees within matter" by bringing the trees' growth rings to the surface and thus reveal their heart. Fourteen of the various examples the artist produced over the years may be found in the layout of MAMbo's exhibition. They are installed in a long horizontal line measuring approximately 100 metres and seem to proceed indefinitely by taking advantage of the perspective illusion of the space.

The layout of the other rooms of MAMbo retrace the most significant steps in the production of the artist.

"Soffio" and "Soffio di creta" (1978/1979), works based on the concept of breath as a volume of air that on entering matter becomes sculpture, and "Soffio di Foglie" (1979) in which bodily weight leaves its mark in the matter itself.

"Palpebre" (1989-1991) and the series "Pelle di Grafite" (2003-2006) are based on drawing as an "action" connected with sculpture. Here, the act of touching and leaving marks become one with the traces left by the

artist on malleable surfaces.

Visitors to MAMbo may also see two recent sculptures entitled "Geometria nelle mani" (2007), and the series "Spine d'Acacia", of which "Spine d'Acacia-occhio" (2004), "Spoglia d'oro su spine d'acacia - bocca" (2002), "Spine D'Acacia - fronte" (2002) "Spine d'acacia (mano) and "Pelle di marmo" (2003) are on show. These are works in which the aspect of drawing springs from the mark left by the hand, the most sensitive points of which are traced by the thorns. "Essere fiume 4" (1995-1996) is also showing in Bologna. This represents one of the most radical actions in the poetics of the artist: it presents two identical stones of which one is the result of nature and one is the result of human action. Penone uses sculpture to reproduce the marks that are left by water on a fluvial stone, thus identifying himself with the essence of the river.

The exhibition itinerary also includes a selection of photographic works in which the physicality of the artist is treated in the same way as any other natural phenomena. Significant among these works is "Rovesciare i propri occhi" (1970) - seven slides in which the body is experienced in an objective fashion through the metaphor of becoming blind. Traditionally conceived as the mirror of the soul, the eyes become the boundary between the subject and the exterior while simultaneously reflecting the images of the world.

Another important section of the show is composed of "Alpi Marittime" (1968-1978). These are images that portrait the artist in the act of intervening on natural elements such as the trees in a wood by leaving an indelible mark that will change over time.

The itinerary concludes with over a hundred drawings produced between 1967 and 2004.

Since its early stages, Giuseppe Penone's research has always been directed towards an intense relationship with nature and its elements and the interaction between the artist's actions and organic mutational processes. Over the years, his studies have addressed the connections between natural and cultural forms, the transformations enacted by time and the growth of the natural elements on which the artist intervenes. Philosophical themes, such as that of being and becoming, evocative of the dimension of the infinite and the sublime conceived as beauty in motion and an attempt to grasp the incomprehensible, pervade his entire work. The result is an extremely personal sculptural work in which the aesthetic dimension is exalted by the refined forms and materials used.



Penone has held solo-exhibitions in numerous international museums and galleries, amongst which the Kunstmuseum, Lucern (1977), Staatliche Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden (1978), Konrad Fischer Galerie (Dusseldorf, on various occasions), Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, (1984), Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris (1984), Marian Goodman Gallery, New York and Paris, (various exhibitions), Centre Pompidou (2004), Museum Kurhaus Kleve (2006-2007).

The artist participated in the 52nd Biennale di Venezia with *Sculture di Linfa*, in the new Italian Pavilion in 2007.

The realization of the exhibition at MAMbo has been made possible thanks to the collaboration of important international institutions including the Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Musée d'Art Moderne Saint-Étienne Métropole, Kunstmuseum Luzern and Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea.

A catalogue of the MAMbo exhibition and Penone's complete oeuvre will be produced in collaboration with the Ikon Gallery, Birmingham. An instant-book on Bologna's exhibition project featuring a conversation between the artist and Gianfranco Maraniello has also been printed.

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Giuseppe Penone. Biographical notes.

Giuseppe Penone was born in Garessio, Cuneo in 1947. He lives and works between Turin and Paris where he teaches at the École des Beaux-Arts. Since his first solo-show at the Deposito d'Arte Presente in Turin in 1968, Penone has based on the research of the dialectic between man and nature. Man experiences the laws of nature through his senses, and nature presents itself as a process of ever-changing matter. The artist intrudes in this process and creates his own works from nature itself and influences the growth and development of living organisms. One example are the images of "Alpi Marittime" (1968), Penone's contribution to Germano Celant's book "Arte Povera" (Mazzotta, Milan, 1969). These document the interventions of the artist on the trees of a wood with the aim of influencing their growth. It is the very interaction between the human body and the elements of nature which distinguish the research of this artist originally from Piedmont, as well as his interest in the history of the matter he uses in his works – wood, clay, bronze, terracotta, marble and graphite.

The series of "Alberi" engaged the artist from 1969 until recently. Penone carves planks of wood until the structure of the original tree, as it was before becoming a work instrument for humans, surfaces. The physicality of the artist is also used in the same way as other natural phenomena. This is the case with "Rovesciare i propri occhi" (1970) in which the body is the barrier that separates the subject from the exterior. Many of Penone's works spring from contact between the body and matter as in "Soffi" (1978) – works in which the terracotta bears the mark of the artist's body and mouth or "Soffi di foglie" (starting from 1979), the convexity of which presents the mark of the artist's body.

The production of works such as "Patate" (1977) and "Zucche" (1978-79) is delegated to the processes of natural growth – grafted so that human intervention is not able to control them completely. On the contrary, in "Gesti vegetali" (1980s) Penone fashioned anthropomorphic bronze sculptures in which the shape is given by the contact of the hand with the clay and where plants are positioned inside the casts so that they can develop freely.

The works that Penone made in the 1990s and more recently also address the dialectic between human beings and nature, between individuals and matter remains the main character. It is sufficient to think of the mark the

artists leaves on malleable surfaces in works such as "Palpebre" (1989-1991) and the series "Pelle di Grafite" (2003-2006).

In 2001, Penone received the prestigious Rolf Schock Prize for Visual Arts from the Swedish Royal Academy of Science.

He has presented his solo shows in the most prestigious international museums and galleries, amongst which the Kunstmuseum, Lucern (1977), Staatliche Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden (1978), Konrad Fischer Galerie Dusseldorf, (on various occasions), Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, (1984), Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris (1984), Marian Goodman Gallery, New York and Paris, (various exhibitions), Galleria Civica d'Arte Contemporanea di Trento (1998), Centre Pompidou, Paris (2004) Museum Kurhaus, Kleve, (2006-2007), Villa Medici, Roma, (2008). In 2007, Penone participated in the 52nd Biennale di Venezia in the new Italian Pavilion with *Sculture di Linfa*. He recently completed "Il giardino delle sculture fluide" in the gardens of the Reggia di Venaria Reale, Turin.

GIUSEPPE PENONE

Exhibition works

Albero di 8 m, 1969

Legno / wood

Collezione / Collection Sergio Casoli

Albero di 5 metri, 1969-1970

Legno di abete / spruce wood

494 x 19,5 x 10 cm

Proprietà / Property Fondazione CRT Progetto Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, 2001

Deposito permanente / Permanent loan

Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli-Torino

GAM - Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Torino

Albero di 12 m, 1970

Legno / wood

1213 x 25 cm

Courtesy Moderna Museet, Stockholm

Albero di 3,50 m, 1970

Legno / wood

350 x 25 x 12 cm

Albero di 5 m, 1972

Legno / wood

Collezione / Collection Campiani di Cellatica

Albero di 5 m, 1973

Legno / wood

470 x 20 x 15 cm

Courtesy Musée d'art moderne, Saint-Etienne Métropole

Albero di 4 m, 1974

Legno / wood

400 x 25 x 12 cm

Albero di 11 m, 1976

Legno / wood

1101 x 20,5 x 12 cm

Courtesy Museum of Art Lucerne

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Albero di 5 m, 1978

Legno / wood

490 x 20 x 10 cm

Collezione privata / *Private Collection*

Albero di 4 m, 1978

Legno / wood

403 x 26 x 12 cm

Albero di 7 m, 1982

Legno / wood

672 x 20 x 10 cm

Albero di 4 m, 1984

Legno / wood

404 x 22 x 11 cm

Albero di 3,50 m, 1985

Legno / wood

355 x 28 x 17 cm

Albero di 5 m, 1991

Legno / wood

500 x 20 x 10 cm

Palpebre, 1989-1991

Carboncino su feltro, gesso / *charcoal on felt, plaster*

19 elementi / *parts*: 350 x 1500 cm ca.

Courtesy De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg

Spoglia d'oro su spine d'acacia (bocca), 2002

Tempera su tela, seta, spine d'acacia, lamina d'oro / *tempera on canvas, silk, thorns, gold leaf*

30 parti/ *parts*: 100 x 120 cm cad.

Roma, Galleria nazionale d'arte moderna

Su gentile concessione del Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali

Spine D'Acacia (Fronte), 2002

Spine, seta, tela / *thorns, silk, canvas*

21 parti / *parts*: 300,99 x 842,65 cm

Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York

Spine d'acacia - occhio, 2004

Tempera, seta, spine d'acacia/ *thorns, silk, canvas*
n. 9 tele / canvases
100 x 120 x 6 cm cad.

Spine d'acacia (mano) e pelle di marmo, 2003

Tela, spine d'acacia, marmo/ *thorns, canvas, marble*
n. 9 tele / canvases: 100 x 120 x 6 cm cad. + n. 9 marmi / *marbles*: 100 x 120 x 6 cm cad.

Pelle di Grafite (riflesso di purpurite), 2003-2006

Grafite su carta nera / *graphite on black paper*
300 x 400 x 3,40 cm (4 elementi / *elements*: 150 x 200 cm cad.)
Courtesy The Artist e / and Marian Goodman Gallery Paris / New York

Pelle di grafite (riflesso di rodonite), 2003-2006

Grafite su carta nera / *graphite on black paper*
300 x 400 x 3,40 cm (4 elementi / *elements*: 150 x 200 cm cad. / *each*)
Courtesy The Artist e / and Marian Goodman

Pelle di Grafite (riflesso di galena), 2007

Disegno / *drawing*
400 x 600 cm

Geometria nelle mani, 2007

Scultura in bronzo e acciaio inossidabile / *Sculpture in bronze and polished stainless steel*
195 x 120 x 103 (h) cm
Courtesy The Artist e / and Marian Goodman Gallery, Paris/New York

Geometria nelle Mani, 2007

Scultura in bronzo e acciaio inossidabile / *Sculpture in bronze and polished stainless steel*
200 x 150 x 150 cm

Scrive, legge, ricorda, 1969

3 foto, cuneo di ferro / *3 photos, iron wedge*
foto: 30x40 cm; cuneo: 3,5 x 6 x 43 cm

Pane alfabeto, 1969

1 foto, pane e lettere in acciaio / *1 photo, bread, steel letters*
foto: 30x40 cm; pane e lettere: 40 x 30 x 270 cm

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Svolgere la propria pelle-pietra, 1971
3 foto, pietra di fiume / 3 photos, stone
foto: 30x40 cm cad.; pietra: 8 x 17 x 15 cm

Alpi Marittime. Crescendo innalzerà la rete, 1968
Fotografia / photo
50 x 60 cm

Alpi Marittime. L'albero ricorderà il contatto, 1968-78
Fotografia / photo
60 x 50 cm

Alpi Marittime. Ho intrecciato tre alberi, 1968
Fotografia / photo
60 x 50 cm

Alpi Marittime. La mia altezza, la lunghezza delle mie braccia, il mio spessore in un ruscello, 1968
Fotografia / photo
60 x 50 cm

Alpi Marittime. Continuerà a crescere tranne che in quel punto, 1968-78
2 Fotografie / photos
84,5 x 84,5 cm
1 elemento in bronzo / 1 bronze element
40x10x12 cm

Alpi Marittime, 1968
Fotografia / photo
60 x 50 cm

Pietra, corda, albero, sole, pioggia, 1968
2 fotografie / photos
60 x 50 cm

Pietra, corda, albero, sole, pioggia, 1968
2 fotografie / photos
60 x 50 cm

Pietra, corda, albero, sole, pioggia, 1968
2 fotografie / photos
60 x 50 cm

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Albero e pietra, 1969
2 fotografie / *photos*
60 x 50 cm cad.

Pietre e alberi, 1969
2 fotografie / *photos*
60 x 50 cm cad.

67, 68, 69, 1969
3 fotografie / *photos*
60 x 50 cm cad.

Ramo parallelepipedo. Omaggio a Malevitch, 1969
Fotografia / *photo*
60 x 50 cm

I rami dell'albero più uno, 1971
Fotografia / *photo*
60 x 50 cm

Soffio di Creta, 1978
Terracotta / *terra cotta*
3 parti / 3 pieces: Ø 60 x 80 cm cad., 220 kg. ca.
Collezione / *Collection* Carlo de' Stefani

Soffio, 1978
Terracotta / *terra cotta*
3 parti / *elements*: 158 x 75 x 79 cm

Soffio di foglie, 1979
Foglie di bosso / *box tree leaves*
dimensioni del corpo dell'artista / *artist's body dimensions*

Essere fiume 4, 1995-1996
Pietra di fiume e pietra di cava / *riverstone and quarry stone*
40 x 80 x 50 cm

Rovesciare i propri occhi, 1970
Fotografia / *photo*
40 x 30 cm
Foto / *photo* © Paolo Mussat Sartor

Rovesciare i propri occhi, 1970
serie di 7 diapositive / *series of 7 slides*

Scrigno, 2008
n. 1 elemento in bronzo / *bronze element*: 450 x 20 x 20 cm
+ n. 42 elementi in cuoio / *leather elements*: 100 x 160 x 10 cm

DRAWINGS AND PHOTOS (various dimensions)

Progetto per vasca nel ruscello, 1968

Le foreste dei tavoli, 1969

Progetto per sfruttare la spinta ascensionale, 1968

Zona d'ombra, 1968

Essere fiume, 1978

Progetto per bosco di libri di cunei, 1968

Studio per soffio di bronzo, 1977

Studio per soffio di bronzo, 1977

Essere fiume, 1979

Essere fiume, 1979

Studio per soffio di creta, 1978

Alpi Marittime, 1968

Alpi Marittime, 1968

Alpi Marittime, 1968

Alpi Marittime, 1968

Progetto per il giardino di pietra, 1968

Il fondo del ruscello, 1967

Le foreste, i viali, i boschi... nelle navi, 1969

Progetto per la lettura dell'albero, 1968

Tre alberi intrecciati, 1968

Alpi Marittime, 1968

Studio per soffio di creta, 1977

Barra d'aria, 1969

Progetto per pavimento magnetizzato, 1968

Lenti a contatto specchianti, 1970

Le foreste delle sedie, 1969

Il fluire del legno, 1969

Le età dell'albero, 1969

Progetto per scultura all'aperto, 1968

Progetto per lenti a contatto specchianti, 1970

Gli alberi del soffitto, 1970

Gli alberi del tetto, 1970

Quattordici anni, 1973

Gli alberi di travi, 1970

Un terrazzo di terra posto a 10 metri di altezza raccoglierà i semi del vento, 1967

Gli alberi del pavimento, 1970

Un terrazzo... dei semi, 1967

Un pugno di pietra nel fiume, 1981

Progetto per soffio di creta, 1977

Tre parole dette nello stesso momento..., 1968

La scultura del fiume è la pietra, scolpire la pietra è essere fiume, 1981

Terra verticale, 1977

Il mio vedere futuro, 1970

Le impronte del crescere, 1969

Alpi Marittime, 1968

Alpi Marittime, 1968

Progetto per gesti vegetali, 1984

Senza titolo, 1985

L'idea della scultura come sovrapposizione di gesti, proiezione di una forma nello spazio, 1980

Fossilizzare i gesti certi o probabili avvenuti in uno spazio ne rallenta l'uso ed indica lo spazio stesso, 1980

Studio per soffio di bronzo, 1977

Chi è là in disparte?... L'inghiotte la solitudine, 1980

Tre pressioni, 1975

Scultura, 1976

Impronte rilevate..., 1973

Impronte rilevate..., 1973

Progetto per gesti vegetali, 1984

Progetto per gesti vegetali, 1987

Progetto per gesti vegetali, 1984

Progetto per gesti vegetali, 1983

Progetto per gesti vegetali, 1984

Progetto per gesti vegetali, 1987

Progetto per gesti vegetali, 1984

Studio per gesto vegetale, 1984

Studio per gesto vegetale, 1987

Solleva la fronte coperta di terra e sprofonda il pensiero nel suolo, 1996

Propagazione dello sguardo, 1993

Dacci notizie d'amore, strappa confessioni tombali, diagnostica ogni morbo, risolvi un enigma, distribuisce eventi, 1991

La leggenda di San Giorgio, 1999

Sulla punta delle spine la sensibilità delle labbra, 2001

Linee d'acqua, 1998

Pietre di fiume come teste, proiezioni di luce come volti, sguardi come alberi, giardini di pietre, 1992

Sguardi incrociati, 2004

La pressione di una carezza su 14 spine, occhio, 2001

Potere degli alberi, punta delle dita, scoprite quanto il poeta vi chiede tamburellandogli sulla fronte, 1996

Sulla punta delle dita il disegno del suono, Albero delle vertebre, 1995

Doppi sguardi incrociati, 2004

Pelle di foglie: sguardo all'orizzonte, 2004

Sguardo vegetale, 1994

Volume d'ombra, 1995

Suture, 1989

Linee d'acqua, 1998

Le impronte del disegno, 1995

Un tal pensiero che avvolto in esso altro non mi occorre, 1999

31/12/1988, 1988

Respirare l'ombra dell'alloro, 1998

La pressione di una carezza, 2001

Lo spazio della scultura-Ofelia, 2001

La luce delle radici svelata dai passi, 2001

Progetto per faggio di Otterlo, 1987

Schiava di vetro, 1993

La pressione di una carezza su 18 spine, bocca, 2001

Pelle di foglie: sguardo a terra, 2004

Anatomia, 1991

L'occhio facilmente si spoglia di luce e ugualmente torna a colmarsene e si deterge dalle nere ombre, 1996

L'alfabeto delle radici (vocali), 1997

Idee di pietre tra le mani, 2004

Avvolto da un fastello di sogni, 1999

Secondo Socrate, Verde del bosco, 1989

Trappole di luce, 1994

Pelle di foglie: doppio sguardo all'orizzonte, 2004

Pelle di marmo su vene di pietra, 2001

La pressione di una carezza su 39 spine, fronte, 2001

Pelle di foglie: sguardo all'orizzonte da terra, 2004



Artist:	Giuseppe Penone
Curator:	Gianfranco Maraniello
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