

PRESS RELEASE

Franco Guerzoni  
*Archeologie senza restauro*  
curated by Gianfranco Maraniello

MAMbo – Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna  
19<sup>th</sup> December 2014 – 19<sup>th</sup> April 2015  
Opening: Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December, h 6 p.m.

The MAMbo – Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna dedicates a personal exhibition to Franco Guerzoni entitled *Archeologie senza restauro*, to run from December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014 to April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015, in a room of the Permanent Collection.

The exhibition focuses on the two temporal extremes of the artist's creative development: his beginnings and his most recent production, presenting a selection of 17 works that are representative of these periods.

Casting an eye back into the past reveals an interest in what has been, but also awareness of the fact that it is irretrievable, and this is a constant in the work of Guerzoni, who calls this practice "archaeology without restoration". Often his works appear similar to archaeological finds – with time-worn surfaces, dust, disconnected parts – and tell of a journey of the imagination through the traces of what is now lost.

Visitors to the exhibition are greeted at the entrance of the room by two recent works entitled *Museo ideale* (Virtual Museum, 2011). Beyond these, they dive back into the past with some youthful works from the *Antropologie* (Anthropologies, 1976-78) – characterised by the pairing of photographs and objects – and the 1971 *Libro* (Book), in which the painted surface of wood and pigments undergo a process of page layout. The early works highlight one of the original points of focus in Guerzoni's research; having abandoned this for several decades, the artist has now come back to it with this exhibition to reveal some unexplored potential.

Since the early 1970s, Guerzoni has dedicated himself to photography, following a personal line of research into images and systems of depiction. This was a period of intense intellectual exchanges with other young artists from Modena, which gave rise to some important collaborative projects, including one with Luigi Ghirri, a close friend with whom he worked on an extensive survey of the province of Modena, in a search for images offering points of interest. Guerzoni's decision to

“reveal” this immense archive of photographs taken by Ghirri, a legacy that has remained hidden for long years, appears today as an unresolved theme requiring a development in the present.

While Guerzoni's recent exhibition at the Triennale di Milano concentrated on the photographic aspect of the shared work with Ghirri, the exhibition at the MAMbo goes a step further: starting from the fundamental investigations of his early work and also from his recent developments which led to the rediscovery of the archive, it concentrates on the evolution of the artist's work on the painted surface, presenting some of his latest work.

The works on show draw on the elements of irresoluteness and inevitable oblivion deriving from references to the past to engage a fresh propulsive energy and a characterising element that emerges most clearly in the works produced specially for the MAMbo: *Affresco in corso d'opera* (Fresco under way, 2014), an installation of variable size; two *Stanze* (Rooms), works on the wall in which the plaster and scagliola support has a sense of continuity with the image or fragment of it; *Grotta* (Cave, 2014), inspired by the painted complex in the Grotta dei Cervi at Porto Badisco (Puglia) which explores the idea of instability thanks to an almost imperceptible movement.

For the exhibition, three works from the 1970s have been donated by the artist to the museum: two *Antropologie* (Anthropologies), one of which incorporating a photograph by Luigi Ghirri and the 1971 *Libro* (Book).

A **catalogue** will be published during the period of the exhibition. Special **didactic activities** will be organised by the MAMbo Educational department throughout the duration of the exhibition.

### Biographical notes

Franco Guerzoni was born in 1948 in Modena. In the early 1970s, he used photography as a tool for depicting his ideas. His “Affreschi” (“Frescoes”) date from 1972, and his “Archeologie” (“Archaeologies”) from 1973. These were followed by the “Antropologie” (“Anthropologies”), research linked to aspects of cultural stratification and the idea of “antique” as loss. During the 1980s, he was involved in the creation of large paper works for walls, which explore the idea of an imaginary geography: “Carte di viaggio” (“Travel maps”), “Grotteschi” (“Grotesques”) and “La parete dimenticata” (“The forgotten wall”). At the end of this decade, he worked on the painted surface perceived as depth.

He presented "Decorazioni e rovine" ("Decorations and ruins") in a personal room at the Venice Biennale of 1990. Since then, through major cycles of works, he has continued his work into time and the poetics of ruins in a sort of archaeology without restoration.

In 2006, following the recovery of a corpus of photographic works taken by the artist in the 1970s, he presented "Paesaggi in polvere" ("Landscapes in dust") at the GAM di Torino.

Since then, his research has been accompanied by an activity of reconnection or transfer from painting to the actual wall itself.

## LISTA OPERE

*Affresco in corso d'opera*, 2014

stucco and powdered pigments on curved panel and pigmented wood

*Archeologie senza restauro*, 2014

chalk, quartz powder and prints on scagliola

*Grotta*, 2014

stucco, paper, graphite

*Grotta*, 2014

stucco, paper, graphite

*Stanza*, 2014

chalk, quartz powder, powdered pigments and prints on scagliola

*Stanza*, 2014

chalk, quartz powder, powdered pigments and prints on scagliola

*Strappo d'affresco*, 2014

stucco and powdered pigments on hollow-core panel, pendulum hung from the ceiling with swing mechanism

*Strappo d'affresco*, 2013

stucco and powdered pigments on hollow-core panel

*Strappo d'affresco*, 2012

stucco and powdered pigments on hollow-core panel

*Museo ideale*, 2011  
mixed media on paper and scagliola

*Museo ideale*, 2011  
mixed media on paper and scagliola, oxidised copper  
134 x 94 cm.

*Antropologie*, 1976/1978  
original print and shard

*Antropologie*, 1976/1978  
colour photographic print and shardio

*Antropologie*, 1976/1978  
original print and shard

*Antropologie*, 1976/1978  
photographic toning and shards, photographic collaboration with Luigi Ghirri

*Antropologie*, 1976/1978  
silver salts print and blades

*Libro*, 1971  
wooden panels and pigments

Further information:

[www.mambo-bologna.org](http://www.mambo-bologna.org)

MAMbo Press office

Elisa Maria Cerra - tel. +39 051 6496653

[elisamaria.cerra@comune.bologna.it](mailto:elisamaria.cerra@comune.bologna.it)

Pomoted by



MAMbo is supported by

