



## PRESS RELEASE

Massimo Kaufmann  
*The Golden Age*

MAMbo – Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna  
25 May – 2 September 2012

MAMbo – Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna dedicates the second event in the series *Prospettive. nuovi percorsi nelle Collezioni del MAMbo. Contrappunti* to **Massimo Kaufmann** (Milan, 1963) with an exhibition titled *The Golden Age*, open from **25 May to 2 September 2012**.

Inaugurated in January 2012 with a project by Marco Gastini, this exhibition format was developed by MAMbo to highlight works donated to its Permanent Collection in an event contextualizing the artist and his/her work via a rich and varied technical and educational presentation accessible to a broad audience.

The generous **donation of the triptych *Cecità*** (oil on canvas, 2009) reaffirms Massimo Kaufmann as an important presence in the MAMbo collections, specifically in the section *Focus on Contemporary Art*, dedicated to the most recent generations in Italian art, for which, in 2008, the Museum acquired *The Golden Age*, a diptych in oil on canvas. This work, painted in New York, is an abstract reinterpretation of the urban landscape seen through the large windows of the artist's studio.

The special in-depth event, whereby MAMbo proudly presents the 2009 triptych to the public together with a selection of works that document the Milanese artist's **most recent output**, borrows its name from the title of this earlier work, which ironically evokes the achievement of a state of grace in a society while hinting at its decadent transformation.

Emerging as a protagonist in the Italian art scene in the late 1980s, Kaufmann worked with the linguistic devices of transparency and mimetism in a continuous and refined manipulation of reality. In the past decade, his quest has been dedicated to **pictorial values**, revisiting themes that he had addressed in the past using less traditional materials, such as silicone on tulle and designs made by using the typewriter.

Kaufmann chooses to work on supports having different dimensions, single surfaces or multipartite compositions organized into diptychs and

triptychs. He brushstrokes on canvas or paper giving life to cellular forms of pulsating color, nebulous atoms – sometimes tightly packed, others more rarified – all in a calibrated arrangement. The artist often creates geometrical patterns radiating an iridescent light that opens the observer's eye to an **atomized universe of abstraction and decorative ornamentation**. Apparently conflicting demands find mediation in painting where symbols and abstract thoughts materialize in a tangible form through the emotional vehicle of color.

The cognitive and emotional dimension of his painting, far removed from a narrative or didactic intent, appears particularly evident in the **cycle of works *Cecità***, which includes the triptych donated to MAMbo and is characterized by a total rejection of iconic images. These are works described by the artist as “blind pictures”, having a tactile consistency, traced out using a dotting technique that evokes the Braille alphabet. The allusive language of these images removes any possibility of identifying the subjects, offering limitless possibilities of interpretation of the arrays, maps, lattices and textures that explode in a rhythmic and musical crescendo.

Massimo Kaufmann's artistic poetics seem to return incessantly to the theme of **time as rhythm**, which becomes the defining trait of his work over the past decade, where he engages in an exhausting exercise of painting focusing increasingly on the performance aspect.

The repetition of a minimal gesture becomes a sort of mystical practice seeking to exalt the beauty of a time that has been lost, found again, measured out, and explored in a highly refined formal and theoretical meditation. The artist's translation of the existential condition of time onto canvas, freely articulated as in a musical score, is accomplished through the molecular proliferation of color, pursuing a possible coincidence between the compositional rhythm of the execution and the tempo of perception.

In these works, Kaufmann's artistic gesture goes beyond the pictorial specifics to work its way into the profound essence of life, seeking **pure aesthetic pleasure** as the highest priority of the creative act.

For the entire duration of the exhibition, on the second Sunday of each month at 6 pm, the MAMbo Educational Department offers a **guided visits** of the museum's Permanent Collection with a special focus on the work of Massimo Kaufmann. The cost is € 4 for person plus admission to the Permanent Collection (full price € 6; reduced price € 4) for groups of 6 to



30 people. For information and reservations: ph. (+39) 051 6496652 (Monday-Friday, 10 am – 1 pm; ph. (+39) 051 6496611 (Saturday-Sunday, 10 am – 5 pm).

On the occasion of the exhibition at MAMbo, Prearo Editore will publish *The Golden Age*, containing an interview with Massimo Kaufmann by Antonio Somaini, essays by Gianfranco Maraniello and Riccardo Caldura, and a broad collection of images.

The **press conference** of the exhibition *The Golden Age* will be held on Thursday, May 24 at 11 am in the MAMbo Conference Room. The artist will be present.

The **vernissage** will take place from 7 pm to 9 pm, with free access to the MAMbo Permanent Collection.

**For further information:**

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

**MAMbo Press Office:**

Silvia Tonelli

Tel. (+39) 051 6496653

[ufficiostampamambo@comune.bologna.it](mailto:ufficiostampamambo@comune.bologna.it)

## LIST OF WORKS

Massimo Kaufmann

*Il solito nudo che scende le solite scale I* [The Same Old Nude Descending the Same Old Stairs I], 2009

Oil on canvas, 296 x 275 cm

Courtesy of the artist

Massimo Kaufmann

*Il solito nudo che scende le solite scale II* [The Same Old Nude Descending the Same Old Stairs II], 2009

Oil on canvas, 296 x 275 cm

Courtesy of the artist

Massimo Kaufmann

*Cecità* [Blindness], 2009

Oil on canvas, 230 x 270 cm (triptych)

Courtesy of the artist

Massimo Kaufmann

*American Landscape*, 2009

Oil on canvas, 182 x 244 cm

Courtesy of the artist

Massimo Kaufmann

*Stripes*, 2010

Oil on canvas, 244 x 182 cm

Courtesy of the artist

Massimo Kaufmann

*Cecità* [Blindness], 2009

Oil on canvas, 230 x 360 cm (diptych)

Courtesy of the artist

Massimo Kaufmann

*The Golden Age*, 2009

Oil on canvas, 244 x 182 cm

Courtesy of the artist

Massimo Kaufmann  
*Cecità* [Blindness], 2009  
Mixed media on paper, 112 x 76 cm  
Courtesy of the artist

Massimo Kaufmann  
*Cecità* [Blindness], 2009  
Mixed media on paper, 112 x 76 cm  
Courtesy of the artist

Massimo Kaufmann  
*Senza titolo* [Untitled], 2009  
Mixed media on paper, 95 x 64 cm  
Courtesy of the artist

## SHORT BIO

**Massimo Kaufmann** was born in Milan in 1963 and currently lives and works in New York and Milan.

Since the late 1980s he has been an active member of the generation of artists born after 1960 who dominated the Italian art scene after the period of Arte Povera and Transavanguardia.

Right from the beginning, his work was part of the 'Emerging Scene' documented by the Museo Pecci of Prato in 1990, in which a new generation of artists, born outside of the ideologies that had characterized past years, engaged with the broadest variety of media, from installation and photography to painting and video.

He exhibited in a host of Italian galleries in this early period: Studio Guenzani and Studio Marconi in Milan; Lia Rumma in Naples; Galleria Emilio Mazzoli in Modena; and Gianenzo Sperone in Rome. In 1990 he was featured at the Museo Pecci of Prato, at the PAC of Milan, and at the Galleria d'arte Moderna of Bologna, museums which purchased some of his works.

Many other institutions acquired his works in the following years: Fondation Cartier (Paris), Martin-Gropius-Bau (Berlin), De Appel (Amsterdam), Ludwig Foundation, Palais Liechtenstein (Vienna), the Sperone Westwater Gallery and the Bronx Museum (New York), Musée d'Art Contemporaine (Nice), Galleria Nazionale d'arte Moderna (Rome), PAC, Triennale, and Palazzo Reale (Milan), as well as museums in Graz, Sarajevo, and Tel Aviv.

He has written many articles and essays on contemporary art, featured in such works as *Riscoprire il Silenzio*, Baldini Castoldi Dalai Editore, 2004. In 2006 and 2007 he worked as an instructor at the Academies of Bergamo and Brescia. He has worked with the Accademia di Brera in Milan since 2010, conducting seminars on contemporary art.

# MAMbo

Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna

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## TECHNICAL SHEET

Title:	Massimo Kaufmann. <i>The Golden Age</i>
Exhibition venue:	MAMbo – Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna via Don Minzoni 14 – Bologna
Exhibition dates:	25 May – 2 September 2012
Opening hours:	Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 12 pm – 6 pm Thursday, Saturday, Sunday, holidays 12 pm – 8 pm
Admission:	full price € 6; reduced price € 4
Information:	ph. +39 051 6496611 – fax +39 051 6496600 info@mambo-bologna.org www.mambo-bologna.org
Guided Visits Educational Department	for groups booking is obligatory ph. +39 051 6496652 / 611 mamboedu@comune.bologna.it special guided visit € 4,00 per person guided visits for groups (max 30 people) € 80 visits in other languages € 100
Catalogue:	Prearo Editore, Milan features an interview with Massimo Kaufmann by Antonio Somaini, and essays by Gianfranco Maraniello and Riccardo Caldura € 20
Press:	ph. +39 051 6496653 ufficiostampamambo@comune.bologna.it
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