

PRESS RELEASE

From September 23rd 2016 to January 8th 2017, Palazzo Fava will host the exhibition *Bologna after Morandi 1945 - 2015*, curated by Renato Barilli and organised by **Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Bologna** and **Genus Bononiae Musei nella Città**.

Two years after the successful exhibition *From Cimabue to Morandi*, which reviewed seven centuries of Art in Bologna, starting from Cimabue and ending with Morandi, the critic and art historian **Renato Barilli** starts where we had left off to analyse the past sixty years of art in Bologna, from 1945 to 2015.

The exhibition **Bologna after Morandi 1945- 2015** puts on display 150 works by seventy artists who were born and were or have been operating in Bologna and the surrounding areas and who, with their personality and style, have influenced the history of art in Bologna since the second post-war period until today.

The show is organised as a path with 12 “stops”, each addressing the most important phenomena taking place in that period in Italy and abroad.

The first stop is the immediate aftermath of World War II with the post-cubism influence which are visible mainly in **Sergio Romiti**'s work. One of the most extensive stops of this path is the *Ultimo naturalismo* (last naturalism), as named by the greatest art critic of the time, **Francesco Arcangeli**, who with this name guided Bolognese artists towards Informal art.

In the late 1950s, a young **Concetto Pozzati** emerges and is ready to abandon the Informal to explore “possible relations” which would then lead to *Pop Art* of which he will become one of the best interpreters.

New artists have their birth around the *Palazzo Bentivoglio School*, founded by **Vasco Bendini**, such as **Pierpaolo Calzolari**, one of the best interpreters of *Arte povera*, and **Luigi Ontani**, firm author of an inversion from “poor” to “rich” and around whom post-modernism, or citazionism, developed and the impressive formation of the *New-new* took place. Another relevant phenomenon is the one emerging around **Andrea Pazienza** and his colleagues, all top cartoonists. Besides collective experiences, the exhibition also includes solo artists, such as **Nino Migliori**, one of the most important Italian photographers. Finally, the show closes with the representatives of the *Nuova Officina Bolognese*: young artists who use new means like installations, performances and video projections.

The 150 works on display have been lent by the Art and History Collections of the Fondazione Carisbo, by the Mambo and the Galleria Comunale di Bologna (Bologna Municipal Gallery), as well as by the artists themselves and by other public and private collections.

Following, an essay by Professor Barilli.

BOLOGNA DOPO MORANDI 1945-2015

PALAZZO FAVA
via Manzoni 2, Bologna
DAL 23 SETTEMBRE 2016
ALL'8 GENNAIO 2017

EXHIBITION

The long path of the exhibition *Bologna after Morandi 1945-2015*, which covers seventy years of art in Bologna, is organised in “stops”, twelve to be precise, in an attempt to show how Bologna’s participation in the great national and international phenomena that took place outside the city walls relates to the specific way in which those phenomena were interpreted here, while taking into account artists’ individual personalities. The importance of the different protagonists is reflected in the number of works displayed, although this remains a very brief snapshot.

Among the “stops” the initial one is on the immediate second post-war period, when Bologna too experiences the fibrillation for the official art movement of the time, the so-called post-cubism, embraced by artists who had been working also in the prior years. Among those, one worthy of a special mention is the sculptor **Luciano Minguzzi**. The culminating expression of this phase can be seen in **Sergio Romiti**’s paintings, who was described at the time as the heir of Morandi’s still lives, still lives which are now cold, metallic, glittering with chrome plating as a result of the impact of the new production systems on traditional house-ware objects.

Post-cubism, the legacy of the 1930s, is soon surpassed by the impetuous wave of the Informal, which corresponds, on the outside, to tragic events such as the explosion of the atomic bomb. Bologna tunes into this advanced and truly “explosive” atmosphere thanks to the most influential critic of the time, **Francesco Arcangeli**, torn between the legacy of his putative artistic fathers Roberto Longhi and Giorgio Morandi — and their teachings in favour of a nature perceived as the source of a well-calibrated balance — and the intuition that that border was to be considered as “the last” — as in the title of a famous essay he wrote —, as insufficient, to be surpassed until it would merge with the pressing wave of the Informal. Arcangeli maintained his preaching in favour of the *Last Naturalism* through its connection with three artists from out of town, the only outsiders included in this review precisely because of their role in Arcangeli’s conception: Ennio Morlotti, Mattia Moreni, who can somehow be associated with an instance of Naturalism, and Alberto Burri, who on the contrary is entirely alien to that climate. The intermediary between those artists and Bologna was Pompilio Mandelli.

Besides the relation with these artists who were contemporary to Arcangeli, the critic also counted on four artists from Bologna who were younger by one generation, **Vasco Bendini**, **Giuseppe Ferrari**, **Bruno Pulga**, **Sergio Vacchi**, fully flowing into the situation which would dominate the late 1950s. Many others co-protagonists of a similar situation are also examined here. However, at the end of that decade there was a need to abandon an excessively self-centred approach to try and establish new “possible relations”. This manifesto immediately found the approval of a young **Concetto Pozzati**. Before following this decisive turn, the exhibition honours characters, more or less isolated, of the calibre of **Pirro Cuniberti**, **Mario Nanni**, **Lucio Saffaro**, **Volfango**. The common thread of “possible relations” leads the way,

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until the emergence, also in Bologna, of “traces of Pop Art”, which is the title of the fifth “stop” the last one on the *piano nobile* (the main floor) of Palazzo Fava. The visit continues on the second floor, where visitors are welcomed by a “mural” in which Pozzati himself offers a persuasive sampling of all the possibilities we have of adhering to the objects of consumerism made available by the “mass society” which matured meantime. On display next to his art, the works by similar artists such as Carlo Gajani and a very young, at the time, Piero Manai, who at some point in his career underwent a complete overturning, shifting from clear images to nocturnal nightmares. This same evolution interested one of the heroes of Arcangeli’s *Last Naturalism*, soon after moving to Rome, Sergio Vacchi, who was also looking for “possible relations” which he found, instead, in the immense heritage of celebrities of the time who were, therefore, not extraneous to a Pop lifestyle revealed by the magazines, and the mass media in general, and which Vacchi captures as if in a nocturnal dream. Another testimonial of Arcangeli’s *Last Naturalism*, Vasco Bendini, felt the need to shift the focus on a different issue, also looking at North American influences, but rather as an expression of New Dada, not Pop. Of the New Dada movement he embraced the incitement to go big and spectacular, by means of happenings and performances, organised in austere mannerist building, Palazzo Bentivoglio. The stop dedicated to the Bentivoglio Studio can be considered one of the most significant of the exhibition as, besides establishing the extraordinary development of Bendini’s art, who then stepped back into his painter’s boots, it is here that Pier Paolo Calzolari took his first steps. The artist would eventually converge into the Arte Povera (literally “poor art”) which, thanks to him, can add a minor Bologna branch to this solidly Turin-based art movement. Another artist who emerged from the *Bentivoglio Studio* is **Luigi Ontani** who, unlike Calzolari, shifts from “poor” to “rich”, in other words he practices a form of art which instead of insisting on witnessing the “here and now” prefers to cultivate the “alibi”, namely the “elsewhere”, revisiting the museum or non-Western places such as India, with traditions and craft skills which are completely unknown to us. Thus, Ontani establishes the yardstick which the second half of the 1970s and later years are inspired by, along with post-modernism, citation, “different repetition”. In fact, the group of the new-New gathers behind him, recruited by the curator of this exhibition, with the collaboration of two talented critics who have accompanied him in this and other undertakings, **Francesca Alinovi** and **Roberto Daolio**. The new-New, who in Bologna are Bruno Benuzzi, Marcello Jori and Giorgio Zucchini, take part in the hectic climate of those years in an emulative competition with the Anachronists and the Transavanguardists. This exhibition also includes a reduced, yet significant, representation of the work of Nino Migliori, one of the most resourceful experimenters of what can be obtained through a heterodox use of photography. Finally, another deciding moment in the history of Bologna revolves around the figure of Andrea Pazienza, through which we can pay tribute to another famous institution of our University, the (Department of Arts, Music and Performing Arts) where he studied. Andrea Pazienza was

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also politically engaged and participated in the protests of 1977. That violence, although filtered and pacified, found its way into **Pazienza's** comic strips which he drew with a wide variety of different styles, dragging along the equally dynamic and creative presence of Daniele Brolli, Giorgio Carpinteri, Igort, Lorenzo Mattotti.

The last two "stops" of this pathway are on the third floor of Palazzo Fava and they are dedicated to *Nuova Officina Bolognese*. New bold talents have leapt out of this beautiful collective in our territory, capable of perfectly tuning into the most advanced national and international practices. These male and female artists have escaped our limited definitions, establishing sound connections with the galleries of the most important centres in and outside of Italy. This phenomenon is also unusual, compared to the past, as female artists outnumber male artists five to three. Among the former there are **Eva Marisaldi, Sabrina Mezzacqui, Sabrina Torelli, Alessandra Tesi, Sissi**. On pair, the couple **Monica Cuoghi-Claudio Corsello**, while the male team includes **Luca Caccioni, Pierpaolo Campanini** and **Alessandro Pessoli**. Bologna, through its University, and more specifically the Department of visual arts – which is now part of a broader Department of Arts –, has also been the *alma mater* of video art, which made its first appearance in an exhibition in 1970 with a closed circuit monitor system in the exhibition rooms, where visitors could admire scenes recorded directly in the studios of the artists on display. Since 2006, a show of the best video products of the year takes place every summer at the Department of Arts, with videos from every part of Italy. A loop projection is offered, with 14 selected works of local artists, some of whom are already on display with permanent works, others representing the latest wave of artists, proof that Bologna's creativity has not ended but rather manages to renew itself at any turn of season.

You can keep in touch and find out all the news about the exhibition through different channels:

Twitter: @genusbononiae #GenusBononiae

Hashtag of the exhibition: #BolognadopoMorandi

Facebook: www.facebook.com/genusbononiae

Website: www.genusbononiae.it

For further information:

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Tickets

Full rate € 11,00 (audio tour included)

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Discounted rate € 9,00 (audio tour included)

Location

Palazzo Fava - Palazzo delle Esposizioni
Via Manzoni, 2 - Bologna

Opening hours

Tuesday to Sunday: 10 am – 7 pm
(the ticket office closes one hour earlier)

Press and Communication Office

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