



## ***“TEXNH, between Myth and Technique”***

1<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST - 8<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024

Piazza Silvestro Franceschi, 7  
Cortina d'Ampezzo (BL)

The Contini Art Gallery is delighted to present the exhibition '*TEXNH, between Myth and Technique*' featuring the work of artist Andrea Valleri. Nestled between the Dolomites, the exhibition will take place at our venue in Cortina d'Ampezzo, located at Piazza Silvestro Franceschi, 7.

Within its paintings and sculptures, this collection evokes an engaging dialogue influenced by illustrious figures of art and literature derived from ancient antiquity. These ideologies are evolutionary in themselves, evident throughout history: from the origins of Homer and Hesiod, bringing forth the works of great masters of philosophical thought (Plato, Phidias, Polycletes), culminating amidst the vibrancy of the Hellenistic period until the Roman civilization, which renowned them globally.

In art, ancient Greece highlighted the limits of which existence takes place both through myth and philosophical thought. Having understood how foundational the dimension of the abstruse realm was compared to that of the tangible one.

In the works of Valleri, the symbolic force of mythological scenes from Ancient Antiquity is accompanied by a contemporary approach influenced by pop art, which intensifies the concept for the modern audience. Intellectual and philosophical appreciation is at the foreground of the creation of his art, comprised of fragments, a fusion of a collective historical and cultural significance. He aspires to connect the viewer with the classical tradition from which it comes, and which constitutes a solid basis. It is the culture of ancient Greece, both at the level of the prominent figures and that of a subliminal dimension, considered by the artist as the ideological and epistemological basis of all Western tradition.

As the title of the exhibition suggests, this particular review of works reflects on the theme of the perennial human will to subjugate nature to its own domain through technique, starting from the mythological narrative that from classical antiquity illustrates this phenomenon.

In "Prometeo", for example, Valleri refers to the mythological tale of the eponymous titan, who challenged Zeus to assist men, taking away the fire from the gods, a model lesson of power over nature. Discovered by

Zeus, Prometheus was condemned to eternal torture, chained upon the peak of the Caucasus, to suffer unceasing tortures, as well as suffering from cold and hunger, from which he had wanted to spare the mortals, by offering them the tool to warm themselves and cook food.

In the sculptures "Circe", "La Pizia" and "Medea", Valleri makes clear reference to these central female figures who warn and, sometimes, inflict punishment on human beings who attempt to find their identity outside of themselves, resulting in profound failure.

The birth of the mechanistic conception of the world, for which the happening of both the physical and the spiritual, is conceived as the product of pure mechanical causality and not preordained to a higher purpose, it is attributable to the desire to conceive a reality whose characteristics are merely physical and therefore easily comprehensible and subject to human advantage. It is not by chance that the Greek word "MHXANH", meaning "machine", derives from the word "MAXOMAI", meaning "fight". In our day in age, this battle can reach catastrophic dimensions: nuclear energy, genetic engineering, science, and engineering of information are the new horizons of this ancient destiny.

The repetition of the renowned quote by Mynski in Dostoevsky's "The Idiot" uses the term "beauty" to make sense of the Russian word, which instead more properly means the "pulchritudo Dei" of which Saint Augustine speaks. If we translate this term as Grace, we are connected to the term harmony, which from ancient Greece onwards signifies the "balance of things".

The balance is always precarious and is achieved through a game and a struggle among opposites. In this sense, art can be placed between myth and technique, or rather between the original intuition of the world and the irreversible destiny of dominion over it which, if uncontrolled, leads to self-destruction.

### Biography

*Andrea Valleri was born in Venice on December 14th, 1959. After completing his studies at a classical Lyceum, he graduated in philosophy in 1985. Native Venetian and Greek by "adoption", as he defines it, he commenced his teaching career as an Italian professor in Athens. Since 1989, he has been teaching philosophy at the Cavanis Institute in Venice. He is represented by the Contini Art Gallery in Venice and Cortina d'Ampezzo.*

*His latest exhibitions are curated in collaboration with some of the most important cultural institutions of Venice and Greece, particularly: The Bevilacqua La Masa Foundation of Venice, the Byzantine and Christian Museum of Athens (Greece), the Epigraphic Museum of Athens (Greece), the National Archaeological Museum of Vathy in Samos (Greece), the Region of Western Greece (in Messolonghi-Greece), the Chamber of Commerce of Aitolokarnania (Greece), the Archaeological Museum of Pythagorion of Samos, the Byzantine Museum of Pythagorion of Samos (Greece) and the National Archaeological Museum of Capo Colonna in Crotona, where his solo exhibition 'Axioma' is on display until 16<sup>th</sup> August.*

**Event in the presence of the artist: Tuesday 20 August at 18:30**

**The exhibit will be held until the 8<sup>th</sup> of September, 2024**

### Opening Hours

**Mon – Sat: 10AM – 1PM / 4PM – 8PM**

**Sun: 10:30AM – 1PM / 4PM – 8PM**

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