

## SACER ESTO – Exhibition of the art work *Reeducation* of Mircea Ciutu

IoDeposito in collaboration with Atelier Montez and with the patronage of the Academy of Romania and the Municipality of Rome present the exhibition Sacer Esto.

Opening Friday April 6<sup>th</sup> at 6.30pm. You can freely visit the exhibition from 6<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> April, Tuesday to Sunday, 6.00pm- 10.00pm at Atelier Montez, Via di Pietralata 147, 00158, Rome. Guided visits, by reservation, are available everyday from 10.00am to 1.00pm. Information and reservation: [giulia.dipaola@iodeposito.org](mailto:giulia.dipaola@iodeposito.org), [federica.ceci@iodeposito.org](mailto:federica.ceci@iodeposito.org)/ +393246636739 +393334682302

With the solemn formula "Sacer esto", contained in the XII Tablets -first written source for the Roman law- the serious sanction of the *sacertas* was imposed in the Archaic Rome, towards the one who was responsible for disturbing the *pax deorum* (the harmony between men and gods). The actions that led to the application of the law, were, in general, those perceived as more offensive towards the established order.

However, since the same era, there was in fact also a second significant of the *sacertas* sanction, connoting the stranger, or, otherwise, the different: the *homo sacer*, considered impure, was not entitled to any right and, at the same time, he was unworthy of any duty. He could be killed, but he was not expendable (anyone killing him remained unpunished and the *homo sacer* could not be judged by the tribunals nor sacrificed in sacrifice, given the impurity that accompanied this status).

The condition of *sacertas*, for its peculiarities, for long time has involved the philosophical thought, intrinsically interested in the fragile bind that link the right to life. On the basis of the essays by M. Foucault and W. Benjamin, the contemporary philosopher Giorgio Agamben entitled her one recent work (*Homo Sacer*, Bompiani, 2005). The *homo sacer*, owner of only bare life and excluded from political life -a contrast from Aristotle between *zoè* and *bios*- configures, according to Agamben, the original biopolitical paradigm through which human life has been captured by law as an exception, and the law, or better to say who rule the law, shows all its extraordinary power in the possibility of decreeing the exception on human life. Precisely for this reason, says the philosopher, this condition belongs not only to the Archaic Rome, but to all ages, and the cruelest examples in contemporary history would be the Nazi extermination camps.

**Mircea Ciutu's** artwork, *Reeducation*, a very large canvas, demonstrating the expressiveness of an intense gestual painting, evokes these thoughts with immediacy: the artist shows the re-education camps where, during the Ceausescu regime, the young Romanian dissidents were locked up. In the artwork, the high pastas concur to give thickness and authenticity to the feelings of the lost and estranged young people who are represented.

The artist, born in 1989 close to the end of the dictatorship, brings within himself a very close perspective of the tragic events and pains suffered by his own land and people. It is a vision not yet elaborated by time, and for this reason it is particularly vivid and immediate in the viewer's perception.

The condition of the occupants of the re-education camps (such as the one of the prisoners in extermination camps during every war and every tyranny), is completely fitting to that of the *homo sacer*: Men, not people, in a limbo that precedes death, but is no longer life; subject to the arbitrariness of those in power, which establishes that their existence is not worthy of any protection.

Mircia Ciutu's artwork will be exhibited solo, like an altarpiece in a secular temple that welcomes and collects equally those who have faith in any god, those who have no faith, and those who has faith only in man.

Furthermore, to crown the visitor's experience will be set-up an intimate and secluded space for the artist's sketches series that will be positioned as in an apse behind the large canvas. The 'secret' access will allow the public to understand the preliminary work that led Ciutu to the realization of the monumental masterpiece.

The ambivalence of the term "sacer", between consecrated and accursed, between pure and impure, is also visually represented and strengthened through the installation in a cult interior of the regenerated industrial architecture (the Atelier Montez), located in a former periphery, distant but still contained in the Rome of faith.

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