



Michelangelo Pistoletto
Scaffali

November 4 – December 22, 2017

Opening reception: Friday, November 3, 2017, 6–8 pm

Luhring Augustine is pleased to announce the opening of *Scaffali*, an exhibition by the renowned Italian artist Michelangelo Pistoletto, marking his fourth solo presentation at the gallery.

Michelangelo Pistoletto (b. 1933, Biella, Italy) is a founding father of the Arte Povera movement and widely regarded as one of the most influential artists of his generation. For over half a century, Pistoletto has sought to merge art and life through sculptural installations, experimental performances, and, most famously, his iconic mirror paintings, which serve as the foundation of his artistic practice. Comprised of photo-silkscreened images on highly polished stainless steel, these signature works were developed in 1962 and represent the artist's dual interest in conceptualism and figuration. By working with a reflective surface, Pistoletto enables the viewer to become an integral part of the piece while the subject of the work is drawn into the activity of the gallery space.

Scaffali, the Italian word for shelves, brings together a selection of recent mirror paintings whose portrayal of industrial storage units presents a tension between the aesthetic and utilitarian. Among the objects depicted are tools and vessels belonging to various trades, including paint canisters, camera lenses, and automotive parts. While Pistoletto has typically relied on the mirror's reflective surface to seamlessly integrate pictorial space with the physical space of the viewer, the *Scaffali* paintings appear to complicate this relationship. The shelves allude to notions of dormancy and stasis, and, as photographic images, they are also emblematic of a fixed time and place. By contrast, the mirror's reflection of the present moment and its unique capacity to introduce endlessly fluctuating content challenges the inherent stability imposed by the shelf's frame. As the shelves occupy the majority of the picture plane, thereby minimizing the viewer's participation, the *Scaffali* paintings foreground their object-like status and command a strong sculptural presence.

Pistoletto has exhibited extensively since the 1950s, and his work is owned by numerous museums and institutions worldwide, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Tate Modern, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; and Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid. Recent solo exhibitions have been presented at the Philadelphia Museum of Art; MAXXI,

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Rome; Serpentine Gallery, London; Musée du Louvre, Paris; Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire; and Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana. Pistoletto's work has been presented in major international exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale on twelve separate occasions and four iterations of Documenta. He has received several awards throughout his distinguished career, including the prestigious Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the Venice Biennale in 2003, the Wolf Foundation Prize for the Arts in 2007, and the Praemium Imperiale Award for Painting in 2013. The artist lives and works in Biella, Italy where he founded the interdisciplinary laboratory Cittadellarte to promote the use of art to foster social change. Cittadellarte's primary mission is centered upon The Third Paradise, conceived in 2003 as the promise of a future realm in which nature and society will coexist in harmony.

The following programming will coincide with the exhibition:

Saturday, November 4

Michelangelo Pistoletto Performance with *Sfera di giornali*, 1967-2017

Magazzino Italian Art
2700 Route 9
Cold Spring, NY 10516

Monday, November 6

1pm

Michelangelo Pistoletto & James Meyer in Conversation

National Gallery of Art
East Building Auditorium
6th & Constitution Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20565

Tuesday, November 7

7pm

Michelangelo Pistoletto: *The Minus Objects 1965-1966* Book Signing

Rizzoli Bookstore
1133 Broadway
New York, NY 10010

For further information about the artist, please contact Lisa Kohli at 212.206.9100 or via email at lisa@luhringaugustine.com. For press requests, please contact Caroline Burghardt at 718.386.2745 or via email at caroline@luhringaugustine.com.