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Gian Maria Tosatti
Sette Stagioni dello Spirito (“Seven Seasons of the Spirit”)

Project room (ground floor) and second floor
December 17th, 2016 – March 20th, 2017

Press preview: December 15th, 12 noon
Opening: December 16th, 7 pm

Curated by Eugenio Viola

In his artistic practice, **Gian Maria Tosatti (Rome, 1980)**, perceives the **city** as a **double, an analogy of the spirit**, in which the human being's inner forms are divided into a concrete composition.

While relating to urban space as already experienced in other cities – Rome (*Devotions*, 2005-2011); New York (*I've Already Been Here*, 2011-ongoing) – in **Naples** the artist for the first time had the unique opportunity to use the whole city as a potential space of intervention. In the ideation and creation of **the striking project *Sette Stagioni dello Spirito*** (“Seven Seasons of the Spirit”), **from 2013 to 2016**, Tosatti retraced the course of *The Interior Castle* (1577), the book in which **St. Teresa of Avila** divides **the human soul into seven chambers**, and transfigured them into so **many monumental environmental installations**, ordered like the progressive chapters of a book that interlaces literary and philosophical sources, historical and theological references, figures, thoughts and stories. It is a work with a narrative and theoretical matrix and in progressive formation, aimed at redefining **the relations between art and community** – between the artwork and the social and anthropological fabric – and conceived as a **single great visual and performative novel** that, by exploring the city and the community dimension of civil living, connects the absolute of the ethical element with our historical present and the conflicts and lacerations that characterize it.

The **exhibition** devoted to the project *Seven Seasons of the Spirit* – housed in two areas of the **MADRE museum**, the **Project room on the ground floor** and **eight second floor galleries** – is the first solo show devoted to the artist in an Italian public museum. It seeks not just to restore the **memory of this experience**, by embodying it in a unified prospect, but to give it a further dimension: to **reconstruct its process behind the scenes**, so enabling the public to revisit it in its overall layout while recounting its inner dimension. The second is rendered as the shroud of a thought in the phase of its formation.

To complete these two elements, **the feature-length film** recounts the impressive process of realization of the project, providing a perfect reverse shot, presented as an additional diary of images that draws the visitor into a story now told for the first time in its entirety.

Likewise based on the presence of a twofold register, textual and visual, the path through the eight galleries on the second floor proceeds by extraction and abstraction, presenting a **sequence of “mental rooms”**, related to the seven chapters of the original project, in addition to a first introductory room. These galleries become so many metaphorical embodiments of the artist’s studio in the course of the years spent by him in Naples, each occupied with the study materials (project drawings, preliminary sketches, documents and remains) as well as a selection of the project works, displayed through the superimposed decisions and changes. This account, full of annotations and erasures, coincides with that **“symphony for the city and its people”**, with which the artist himself has referred to his work. In this way, for the first time, the visitor can diachronically traverse the whole cycle of *Seven Seasons of the Spirit*, sharing a **different view** of it, necessarily selective, as it is the one dictated by memory, and at the same time **new**, induced by the presentation of this experience in the museum context.

The **seven site-specific interventions/chapters** of *Seven Seasons of the Spirit* have enabled the reopening and gradual recovery of certain historical buildings and monuments, abandoned or neglected in Naples, which have been radically transformed by the artist in the last three years. These places have become radiating points for works that, from the human sphere, have expanded into the urban one, often reviving whole neighborhoods. Each of these “stations” has been given a title and a connotation, which from the deepest evil strives towards absolute good:

1_ *The Plague* (Church of SS. Cosma and Damiano ai Banchi Nuovi) addressed the issue of unawareness as the most serious disease of the spirit;

2_ *Summer* (former Municipal Registry in Piazza Dante) focused on the principle of inertia as the main cause of dissolution;

3_ *Lucifer* (former General Warehouses of the Port of Naples) explored the complexity of the concept of error;

4_ *Homecoming* (former Military Hospital) concentrated on the theme of salvation;

5_ *The Fundamentals of Light* (former Convent of Santa Maria della Fede) investigated the concept of searching for the truth;

6_ *Miracle* (former factory in the Forcella district) instituted a true practice of goodness;

7_ *Earth of the Last Heaven* (Convent of the Santissima Trinità delle Monache, Via Santa Lucia al Monte, at the corner with via Pasquale Scura, on view until January 7th, 2017) suggested a possible suggestion on humanity’s ultimate destiny.

The original project *Seven Seasons of the Spirit*, in its territorial articulation, was promoted and organized by **Fondazione Morra** with the support of **Galleria Lia Rumma**.

Also from **Monday, December 19th, 2016 to Saturday, January 7th, 2017** (closed on Tuesdays), **from 10 am to 4 pm**, the installation **7_ Earth of the Last Heaven** will be open to visitors at the Convent of the Santissima Trinità delle Monache, via Santa Lucia al Monte (corner with Pasquale Scura St.), Naples.

For information contact Galleria Lia Rumma on 081 19812354 (Tuesday–Saturday, 10 am–7 pm).

Gian Maria Tosatti (Rome, 1980) lives and works in Naples and New York. His projects and works are long-term investigations of themes related to the concept of identity, both politically and spiritually. His principal works belong to the cycles *Devotions* (2005-11), *Fundamentals* (2011–in progress) and *Considerations* (2009–in progress). The artist –winner of the *Premio Terna* (2008), *Premio Fondazione Ettore Fico* (2016) and shortlisted for the *Premio Furla* (2014) – exhibited in numerous institutions, including Centro Wilfredo Lam (Havana, 2015); Hessel Museum/CCS BARD (New York, 2014); Casa Testori (Milan, 2014); American Academy in Rome (Rome, 2013); Museo Villa Croce (Genoa, 2012); Tenuta dello Scompiglio (Lucca, 2012); Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (New York, 2011); Chelsea Art Museum (New York, 2009); Palazzo delle Esposizioni (Rome, 2008). His works are included in the permanent collections of the MAAM (Rome) and Castel Sant’Elmo (Naples), as winner in 2014 of the *Un’Opera per il Castello* prize promoted by MIBACT.

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