

κένωσις

Lucio Fontana and Fausto Melotti

Exhibition dates: from 10 October to 25 November 2022

Opening times: Monday to Friday from 9 am to 5 pm, Saturday by appointment

Exhibition venue: Via Clemente Maraini 24, Lugano, Switzerland

Repetto Gallery is delighted to announce the inauguration of its new headquarters in Lugano, with this KENOSIS exhibition dedicated to two of the greatest Italian artists of the twentieth century: Lucio Fontana and Fausto Melotti.

Kenosis: emptying; *kenós* (emptiness): as renunciation, reduction and transparency, these are key terms by which to indicate the very heart of their poetics. Lucio Fontana (Rosario, Argentina, 1899 – Comabbio, Varese, 1968) and Fausto Melotti (Rovereto, 1901 – Milan, 1986). The exhibition presents a confrontation, a dialogue between two great artists who were also friends, showcasing their elective affinity in freeing art from matter, in making it ever more essential, lyrical and luminous. In breaking out of “our shell, our physical cortex.”

In Fontana’s work, in his splendid spatial environments and his famous cuts and holes, starting from the late 1940s, a clear, clean, radical essentiality in deep and minimal gestures very much espoused Ludwig Mies van der Rohe’s favourite motto: Less is more. His fortunate, elegant reduction conquers more space and higher light. In the very clear-minded words of Melotti, “Fontana’s ‘cut’ is the emblematic need to get out of the informal jungle.”

In Melotti, the same reduction, grace and transparency may be found in a less vertical but more horizontal declination: the ideal horizontality of the ancient frieze, freely taken up in the new and diverse metopes of the story, of the narrative, of the archaic and classical myth.

About fifty works will be on display in an intense and cheerful dialogue, testifying to their ‘new Renaissance’ with different works documenting their different paths: from baroque ceramics by Fontana, his *Donna allo specchio* (1948), to one of Melotti’s most emblematic ‘sculptures’ in brass and painted fabric: *The Exit of the Valkyries* (1980), where his great love for music is crystallised in a symbolic aerial image, both fragile and solemn. Numerous spatial concepts, central to Fontana’s poetics, are displayed both on paper and other materials. The exhibition will also feature two masterpieces on canvas: a three-cut red (1962, 65 x 50 cm), and a rare cut on gold-painted canvas (1960, 70 x 60 cm), where his concept of waiting, of a two-dimensional surface that becomes three-dimensional on opening up, alludes to awaiting and dreaming of new, unseen forms from beyond: the new universe of spatial conquests. Spaces and forms, domestic galaxies and intimate nebulae, at times baroque – like Melotti’s restless lines of research and movement – and at other times essential and archaic – like in Fontana’s numerous ceramics, painted plaster casts and mixed-media papers.

For more information and images, contact us by email at info@repettogallery.com.