

OBLONG



CONTEMPORARY
ART GALLERY

Barcelona artist Manu Alguero exhibits his explosive works at Oblong Contemporary gallery in Forte dei Marmi.

The phoenix of Manu Alguero

Destroying to rebuild, with that apparent nonchalance and optimism typical of those who know that only from the new we can deliver a message of life and regeneration.

Manu Alguero, a Spanish artist, but also a *fashion designer* with a 360-degree view of the world - his studies in the 1990s at Saint Martin's School of Art in London, a melting pot of research and avant-garde trends, have indulged the anxiety of experimentation that has always devoured him - he does not hesitate to make colours explode (literally!) by “shooting” them like fireworks on his canvases: oil, acrylic or metallic paste.

He made his very personal fires crackle, making sure that the fruits of the pyrotechnic hazards are deposited on the paintings, then he passes not only the brushes, but also his fingers, directly on the pictorial surface impregnated with the unusual amalgam of colour and dust, mixing it where it is necessary, and making figurations emerge, as in a surrealist game to which the tradition that belongs in Catalonia to the genius of bizarre invention Salvador Dali does not seem extraneous.

But there is much more in the faces and bodies that Alguero tears from the shapeless matter: for example, the sense of the density of the earthy colors typical of the master of the informal Antoni Tàpies (born a hundred years ago also in Barcelona) , and the African-American sign of the graffiti artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, who, between primitivism and

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chromatically bright expressionism, starting from the nineties, after his death, certainly exerted a profound influence on the young European.

But, beyond the comparisons with famous artists, what is most striking in the works of Manu Alguerò, exhibited today in the "Seduzioni Esplosive" exhibition at the new space of Oblong Contemporary Art Gallery in Forte dei Marmi (via G. Carducci 45, from August 17 to September 30), is the elegance of the line with which the artist circumscribes the representations, articulating the shapes suggested by the strength of color with fluidity and elegance. Fifteen paintings with explicit titles - "Catalina", "The Power of Red", "Behind the Poker Face", "Groove On I", "Explosion", or "Reunion de Amigos" - now represent the latest developments in Forte dei Marmi of Alguerò's research, in part already presented in recent months always at Oblong, but in the Dubai headquarters.

Thus, here is the "pacification" between the destructive violence of the artist and the stylist's calligraphic inclination. In fact, the Catalan painter composes the dualism of his creative flair: on the one hand that of the man deeply touched since adolescence by the business of his family, owner of a demolition company; on the other hand, that of the aesthete, capable of transforming even what belongs to the strictest daily life into beauty. He himself remembers how as a child he was deeply moved to witness the explosion that accompanied the demolition of entire buildings. Debated between old and new, past and future, Manu Alguerò has therefore embraced the way to implement the reconciliation of extremes: erasing tradition, making a clean sweep of conventions and preconceptions, and following the path of a rebirth that opens the doors of tomorrow thanks to the ductility of matter, raped and gutted in its occult potential and, like a Phoenix, ready to rise again, to face new challenges: pictorial and human.

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Alessandra Quattordio

RELEASE ENDS

Press Release written by Alessandra Quattordio

About Oblong Contemporary Art Gallery:

Oblong is a Dubai based Art Gallery and its mission is to create a successful global arena for culture and art. Primarily involved in promoting contemporary and modern art, operating both locally and on the international art platform; the gallery is a place of cultural exchange, exhibiting some of the highest quality artworks and giving a platform to artists from the region. Additionally, Oblong hosts a strong program of workshops, educational initiatives and a cross-cultural art exchange program between Dubai, U.A.E and Pietrasanta, on the coast of northern Tuscany in Italy. The gallery name was derived from the 'oblong' shape, which comes from three other shapes; a square, a circle and a rectangle. The founders of Oblong, Emanuela Venturini & Paola Marucci described the shape as a representation of their different backgrounds and characters. Emanuela and Paola have a shared vision and combined their love for art and culture to create a platform for cross-cultural exchange between Dubai (UAE) and Pietrasanta (Italy). With strong links to the Tuscan city of Pietrasanta, Oblong embodies the DNA of this historic city and honors its rich heritage.

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