

GLADSTONE GALLERY

"Boetti/Salvo "Vivere lavorando giocando" at LAC Lugano Arte e Cultura, Lugano,"
Mousse, Spring 2017

MOUSSE

Boetti/Salvo "Vivere lavorando giocando" at LAC Lugano Arte e Cultura, Lugano

"Boetti/Salvo. Vivere lavorando giocando" showcases about 150 works, including international loans from the Archivio Alighiero Boetti in Rome, the Archivio Salvo in Turin, as well as from museums and galleries and private collections.

The first part of the exhibition focuses on the dialogue and the exchange of a conceptual nature between the two artists from the late 1960s to the early '70s. It was a period when they spent a great deal of their time surrounded by the general climate of renewal in the Turin of the Arte Povera movements, enlivened in those days by vital and innovative spaces like the Sperone, Notizie and Christian Stein galleries. In that period Boetti was drawn to a constant reformulation of his identity as an artist: the idea of authorship, of the mise-en-scène of the subject in its doubling, multiplying, or becoming lost was obsessively present in his research. In parallel, time as both the object of reflection and an active creative force became a reason for ongoing

challenge and confrontation. During the same period, Boetti was drawn to the “order and disorder” of the phenomena of reality, which he explored as he searched for a system of rules, regulations, criteria that, when applied to words and images, would lead to the configuration of the work of art on two-dimensional spaces. For Salvo the years between 1969 and the early 1970s represent the moment when his identity was affirmed and he assumed his I as the subject of self-reference and celebration via a process of self-historicization laced with irony. Until about 1972, photographic works of a conceptual nature alternated with gravestones and embroidery characterized by the inscriptions of words and phrases. Around 1973, Salvo, who was known for his prodigious memory and encyclopaedic knowledge, veered towards figurative painting steeped in references to art history, a rather unusual choice in a season when Conceptualism was dominant. Both Boetti and Salvo pondered—albeit with different meanings—the representation of the Self, their identity as individuals and as artists, while constantly keeping their gaze trained on the complexity of reality (Boetti) and the mystery of art (Salvo). The first sections of the exhibition are organized according to five themes: “The Image of the Self”, “Creating Phrases”, “Tautologies”, “Thinking about Time” and “Maps”, in which the works of the two artists converse directly.

The second part of the exhibition, entitled “The Infinite Variety of Everything”, instead focuses on developments subsequent to the two artists’ respective research, which by that time they were carrying out in a completely independent way. This part of the exhibition takes into account the gradual distance that was created between the two artists. Starting in 1972, the year Boetti moved to Rome, while the two artists commonly continued to work on

themes such as identity, the journey, and death, it was the very conception of the two-dimensional surface and painting that separated them once and for all. From the mid-1970s, Salvo devoted himself entirely to painting, while Boetti grew involved in the practice of proliferation and proxy, that is to say, assigning to assistants, collaborators, and artisans, at time unbeknownst to him, the creation of the works themselves, often conceived in a series, in cycles, or in variants. Both artists paved the way for a multiplicity of languages and techniques, making a fundamental contribution to the Conceptualism of the 1960s and '70s. Boetti and Salvo continue to be figures of reference for the new generations of Post-Conceptual artists in the twenty-first century.



Boetti/Salvo "Vivere lavorando giocando" at LAC Lugano Arte e Cultura, Lugano, 2017
Photo: Studio Pagi

Agata Boetti of the Archivio Alighiero Boetti, and Norma Mangione with Cristina Tuarivoli of the Archivio Salvo, have played a crucial role in the preparation of this exhibition. The precious information and materials, often hitherto unpublished, generously made available have been of essential value to the success of this exhibition project.