The exhibition, curated by Giorgio Verzotti, presents about fifty of the most interesting works representing the main international trends, developed from the 1960s through today by artists such as Lucio Fontana, Alberto Burri, Vincenzo Agnetti, Trisha Brown, Richard Nonas, Grazia Varisco, Alighiero Boetti, Bruce Nauman, Gilberto Zorio, Richard Long, Tony Cragg, Grazia Toderi, Gabriel Kuri, Luca Trevisani and many others.

From 25 March to 20 June 2010, the Fondazione Stelline in Milan will stage IN PRAISE OF SIMPLICITY. A Characteristic of Contemporary Art, with about fifty of the most interesting works representing the main international trends, developed from the 1960s through today by artists such as Lucio Fontana, Alberto Burri, Vincenzo Agnetti, Trisha Brown, Richard Nonas, Grazia Varisco, Alighiero Boetti, Bruce Nauman, Gilberto Zorio, Richard Long, Tony Cragg, Grazia Toderi, Gabriel Kuri, Luca Trevisani and others.

The exhibition commemorates Claudia Gian Ferrari, a member of the Advisory Committee of the Fondazione Stelline along with Jean Clair and Elena Pontiggia, as he supported this project from the outset.

The exhibition, curated by Giorgio Verzotti, is promoted by the Fondazione Stelline under the auspices of the Region of Lombardy – Cultures, Identities and Autonomies of Lombardy, the City of Milan – Culture, and the Province of Milan, and it focuses on artists whose œuvre is characterized by the dramatic simplification of their artistic approach.

Indeed, their works are based on streamlined creative processes that are transparent in terms of their structural and conceptual connections. Many of them are made of poor materials that are “non-artistic”, as they reflect the immediate, the commonplace and the quotidian.

These elements of simplicity and transparency tend to open the work up to interaction with the observer, yet are juxtaposed – perhaps intentionally – with another, different array of expressive choices, tied to complex production methods that are technically difficult but that, above all, are hard for the general public to grasp, thus denying them an interpretative possibility and any type of active participation.
In Praise of Simplicity strives to document areas of research that are linked to the socializing and democratic tradition of Modernism, the tradition taken up as early as the 1960s and 1970s, in which the main currents of artistic research viewed the observer as the active recipient of such dialogue.

Consequently, there was a move to use readily available materials and arrive at processes that are easily conveyed on a social level (including technological ones that are “conjugated” in terms of simplicity).

Art is once more a field of action in which many users can interact. They are given interpretative and potentially critical instruments at the very moment in which the work is offered to them, so that they can intervene in the process itself when it is shaped – but not entirely controlled – by the artist.

Complexity remains, but must be sought elsewhere: not so much in the type of execution but in the conceptual profundity that motivates it, the thematic implications that are called into question, and the emotional implications that ensue.

The exhibition is accompanied by a bilingual catalogue (Italian/English) published by Silvana Editoriale.


Milan, February 2010

IN PRAISE OF SIMPLICITY
A Characteristic of Contemporary Art
Milan, Fondazione Stelline (Corso Magenta 61)
25 March – 20 June 2010

Hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. (closed Mondays)
Tickets: full price € 8; special discounts € 6; school groups € 3

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