

GUERRE ET PAIX

with the complicity of Jean Nouvel

14.10.2024 – 30.11.2024

Inauguration of **GALLERIA CONTINUA / Paris Matignon** on 14.10.24

“These works are orphaned objects. Their spirit is not content of merely being displayed. They are witnesses to the world, fatal witnesses... Wherever they are found, it is their fate, they cannot remain silent. Witnesses to their own exile, they have no home. They have no country, they are refugees. Like rebels, they do not allow themselves to be exhibited. They pose. They expose themselves and, in doing so, they expose Adel Abdessemed.” – Jean Nouvel

GALLERIA CONTINUA is pleased to announce the opening of its third space in France, in the heart of the Matignon Saint-Honoré district, an emblematic location in the capital and a key center of the Parisian art market for over a century. This project aligns with the growing dynamism of Paris on the international art scene and offers gallery artists a new space with a rich history, remaining faithful to the gallery's desire to reach an increasingly diverse audience. This new site expands the gallery's international presence and demonstrates its love for France.

In the space located at 108 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, in the eighth arrondissement of Paris and part of the prestigious Hôtel Le Bristol facade, the gallery will host exhibitions by the artists it represents. In keeping with its artistic identity, it will offer ambitious projects, creating a convivial and cosmopolitan atmosphere enriched by various cultural influences. This new space strengthens the gallery's unique identity, embedding it in the vibrant cultural landscape of the iconic western district of Paris. Here, international art galleries, modern and contemporary art dealers, prestigious auction houses, as well as emblematic fashion, craft, and lifestyle venues converge.

The inaugural exhibition on 14 October 2024 at **GALLERIA CONTINUA / Paris Matignon**, titled “Guerre et Paix,” proposes a trans-historical dialogue between Adel Abdessemed and Giorgio Morandi. The exhibition presents a selection of works highlighting the connections and different visions of the two artists, enhanced by the scenographic intervention of **Jean Nouvel**.

Giorgio Morandi developed a unique poetic universe over decades through the patient search for silent harmony, which over time became more radical, transforming some bottles,

vases, bowls, jugs, and other simple objects removed from daily use into powerful enigmas on canvas. In contrast, Adel Abdessemed is an artist of reality, a seismograph of the world around him, transforming creative and spectacular gestures into emotional shocks, into cries of explosive and poetic power.

The two artists, seemingly at opposite ends of the spectrum, approached the still-life genre through very different paths. This unexpected point of convergence highlights a fundamental similarity at the heart of their practice: the search for radicality—both pictorial and conceptual—reflected in a shared obsession with truth.

In Morandi's work, this pursuit seems to manifest in rigor, balance, and elegance: formats contract, and representation progressively reduces to geometric forms. On the contrary, Abdessemed confronts reality in all its banality and violence: the gesture is instinctive, sometimes even brutal, the formats exceed conventional drawing limits, and the charcoal stroke, far from schematic, is virtuosic in precision.

While one applies traditional drawing codes to painting, the other gives his drawings the spectacle usually reserved for painting. Through their artistic research, both have transcended the limits of technique, pushing the boundaries of representation to capture the essence of objects and landscapes.

About the artists:

Born in Constantine, Algeria, in 1971, **Adel Abdessemed** uses multiple artistic techniques. His work, imbued with classical literature and poetry, addresses themes such as war and religion, characterized by a brutality that seeks to represent the violence inherent in the

contemporary world. Memory, trauma, conflict, ecstasy, and lucidity: for over thirty years, the French artist of Berber origin has constructed a committed and incendiary oeuvre that has quickly resonated on the international scene.

Fleeing Algeria after the outbreak of the civil war in 1992, he carries with him the memory of war and the burden of atrocities. In France, he studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Lyon, and immersed in classical culture, literature, poetry, and passionate about music, he uses various media to make art a place where the violence and fragility of contemporary society are exposed.

Adel Abdessemed's work will be featured at the Bangkok Biennale in October 2024 and the Dakar Biennale in November. He has exhibited three times at the Venice Biennale (2003, 2009, 2015), as well as at the Istanbul Biennale (2017), Havana (2009), Gwangju (2008), Lyon (2007), and São Paulo (2006). Since his first solo exhibition in 2001, many other monographs have followed, including at PS1/MoMA in New York; the MIT List Visual Arts Center in Cambridge, MA, USA; the Parasol unit in London; the Centre Pompidou in Paris (Adel Abdessemed. *Je suis innocent*, 2012); the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Canada (Adel Abdessemed: *Conflict*, 2017); the MAC Museum of Contemporary Art, Lyon, France (Adel Abdessemed. *L'antidote*, 2018); and the Rockbund Museum of Arts in Shanghai (Adel Abdessemed: *An Imperial Message*, 2022). In 2024, the artist will direct the artistic staging, costumes, sets, and video for Olivier Messiaen's opera *Saint Francis of Assisi* at the Grand Théâtre de Genève.

Giorgio Morandi (1890-1964) is considered one of Italy's greatest artists. At the core of his work are the landscapes of the Emilian Apennines and still life's composed of meticulously arranged objects in his studio. From 1913, Morandi became interested in Futurism, thanks to encounters with various exponents of the movement, such as Francesco Balilla Pratella, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Umberto Boccioni, and Luigi Russolo, and exhibited alongside them. After a brief military service, the artist returned to Bologna and led a quiet, private life, devoting himself almost exclusively to still life.

In 1919, he met Giorgio de Chirico and Carlo Carrà, thanks to the critic Giuseppe Raimondi, with whom he became friends; through them, he approached metaphysical painting, though maintaining a more intimate touch. According to critic Cesare Brandi, his still life's possess an "impenetrable integrity, like a celestial body." Morandi also participated in the exhibitions of the *Novecento Group* in Milan and exhibited in various Italian and international cities. In the 1930s, he held the chair of printmaking at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna. In 1948, he was awarded first prize for painting at the Venice Biennale; in 1953, the Grand Prize for engraving at the 2nd São Paulo Biennale, and in 1956 he won the Grand Prize for painting at the 4th Biennale. Admiration for Morandi's work in Italy is reflected in Federico Fellini's "La Dolce

Vita" (1960), where his paintings are evoked as the epitome of cultural sophistication. Giorgio Morandi passed away in Bologna on June 18, 1964 and where a museum dedicated to the artist opened in 1993.

Works are provided by *Galleria d'Arte Maggiore g.a.m., Bologna - Venezia - Paris* and *Tornabuoni Art*.

About the Gallery:

GALLERIA CONTINUA is a contemporary art gallery founded in 1990 in San Gimignano by three friends-Mario Cristiani, Lorenzo Fiaschi, and Maurizio Rigillo-today it operates in San Gimignano, Rome, Beijing, Paris, Les Moulins, Havana and São Paulo.

GALLERIA CONTINUA represents a desire to create, through art, a continuity between eras, enhancing the connection between past, present, and future, with a commitment to actively contributing to the writing of the contemporary art scene. Investing in unique, historically infused spaces, often far from conventional ideals, the gallery has developed a strong identity over more than thirty years of activity, embracing themes related to creation and cultural blending. Its various global locations spaces foster encounters and exchanges centered around works of art, presenting a vision of beauty that is pluralistic, joyful, cosmopolitan, and rich in diverse influences.

In 2024, the gallery inaugurates a third French space in the heart of Matignon, the historic epicenter of the art market and a lively neighborhood in western Paris where important international contemporary art galleries, modern art dealers, and iconic fashion, craft, and lifestyle houses come together, attracting visitors from all over the world.

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