



## IMPERFECT TENSE

Present-day Glances of the Archaeological Museum of the Province of Salerno  
curated by Antonello Tolve and Stefania Zuliani

Fabrizio Cotognini

PER AQUAM

Museo Archeologico Provinciale di Salerno

May 7 / June 7, 2014

opening | Wednesday, May 7, 2014, 5.30-7.30pm

The **Fondazione Filiberto Menna – Centro Studi d'Arte Contemporanea**, in collaboration with the **Province of Salerno** and the **Comune of Salerno**, founding members of the Fondazione, are pleased to announce the project **PER AQUAM**, by **Fabrizio Cotognini**, the first installment of the cycle *Imperfect Tense*, curated by **Antonello Tolve** and **Stefania Zuliani**. The exhibition, which will open at the **Archaeological Museum of the Province of Salerno** (via San Benedetto, 28) Wednesday, May 7, 2014 at 5.30pm, will be visitable from May 8 to June 7, 2014 (daily, except Mondays, from 9am to 7.30pm).

The core-concept of Cotognini's project for this exhibition, articulated in several installations rigorously site specific, is the sea, conceived as archive and treasure chest of memories, limitless repository of objects and relics coming from a past that water and time, «that mighty sculptor» (Yourcenar), transform, conceal, and, sometimes, return back to us.

Starting from *Desantnik USV50* – a model of diving helmet produced in the Soviet Union in the 1920s, and here employed as personal interpretation of Apollo's bronze head that surfaced in the bay of Salerno – the artist has envisaged an *aquatic itinerary* that articulates in the Museum's space. This itinerary aims at offering to the public a series of constructive contradictions, analytical actions, and *underwater paths* impacting on past and present. Thus, the diving helmet becomes an «artefact of contemporary archaeology», but also a useful «tool» «to travel through the water in search of new archaeological discoveries», of new spells, of new haunting atmospheres.

Disseminated through the museum's collections, there are drawings representing *Ichtyomorphs*, creatures in the shape of fish, like *The Sea Bishop* or *The Sea Monk*, and some glass *Dragonflies*, water insects symbolising the warrior's unquenchable disquiet of the spirit. A light up diptych, a light box describing the two «medusas», the mythological Greek monster and the jellyfish (*medusa*), connects the two floors of the museum. Taken all together, these artworks take part in a process of gentle contamination between themselves and the archaeological artefacts stored in the Museum, tracing an itinerary aimed at celebrating the Tyrrhenian Sea, its hidden treasures, and its culture. *Immersion*, a sound-track produced in collaboration with the sound artist **Carlo Marchionni**, acts as a link between the different works of art and propagates through the museum's space, turning it into a total work of art. The effect is the production of a fairytale-like narrative bridging different moods and languages, to the point of joining together the realm of archaeology with that of contemporary art.

During the opening the artist will invite the public to a critical conversation devoted to the discussion of his research and the motives behind the creation of his project for the Archaeological Museum of the Province of Salerno.

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The project *Imperfect Tense* is supported by the **DISPAC – the Science of Cultural Heritage Department of the University of Salerno** and the **Academy of Fine Arts at Macerata**. Technical supporters | **Associazione ArteXa, Fonderie culturali, Modula srl** and **Eusebi Arredamenti**.

Il Presidente della Fondazione  
prof. Angelo Trimarco

## FABRIZIO COTOGNINI

*per aquam*

opening | Wednesday, May 7, 2014, 5.30-7.30pm

*institutional greetings*

**Angelo Trimarco** | President of the Fondazione Filiberto Menna

**Antonio Iannone** | President of the Provincia di Salerno

**Matteo Bottone** | Assessor Patrimonio, Cultura e Beni Culturali, Provincia di Salerno

**Ermanno Guerra** | Assessor Cultura e Università, Comune di Salerno

**Barbara Cussino** | Director Settore Musei e Biblioteche, Provincia di Salerno

06.00pm

**critical conversation with the artist**

**Fabrizio Cotognini** was born in Macerata (1983). He currently lives and works in Civitanova Marche. He graduated in painting and sculpture at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Macerata (2009) and has presented his works in several exhibitions, among which: *Le ragioni della pittura. Esiti e prospettive di un medium* (Castelbasso, 2013, curated by L. Cherubini and E. Viola); *Errors Allowed* (Ancona, 2013, cur. M. Valentini); *Disorder* (Milan, 2012); *Symbiosis* (Rome, 2012); *Ma quale, tra tutti i mondi, è il più esclusivo?* (Salerno, 2011, cur. A. Tolve); *Artday 2* (Macerata, 2011, cur. Franko B); *Arte italiana a Fukuoka* (Fukuoka, 2010, cur. A. Maugeri); *Low* (Chicago, 2009, cur. S.I. Ray); *Contaminazioni* (Morrovalle, 2009, cur. I. Quintavalle); *Artika* (Recanati, 2008, cur. N. Alessandrini); *Pitti Uomo* (Florence, 2007).

In his works, which moves along the archaeological and historical horizons of art, Fabrizio Cotognini constantly refers to antiquity revisited through a contemporary approach, and privileges drawing as key element of an artistic research that also employs the new media. For him, time, memory, and history are majestic entities that he overturns, twists, and bends in scenic apparatuses that enhance their instability. In so doing, Cotognini joins word and image in a conversation involving sign, drawing, and writing, a conversation which becomes a place for contemplation and, at the same time, of reflexive concentration. It may also seem, and just seem, one of those glosses reminiscing the pleasure of reading ancient books, or even a late-Gothic illumination or a precious decoration revealing its exquisite details.

# IMPERFECT TENSE

**Present-day Glances of the Archaeological Museum of the Province of Salerno**

curated by **Antonello Tolve** and **Stefania Zuliani**

**spring-autumn 2014**

Interventions and installations site specific by

**Elena Bellantoni | Fabrizio Cotognini | Giulia Palombino | Gian Maria Tosatti | Ivano Troisi**

The inexhaustible newness of the past combined with the transient nature of a present that turns all too easily into ruins. It is in this constant tension that a tense is defined – our time, so to say, that is plural and anachronistic: a *post-historical* condition where passion for the museum and the triumph of the archive («where things get their beginning», in the words of Derrida) corresponds to the rapid consumption of all solid chronology, the multiplicity of stories, the horizontal and universal extension of the tag that is the result of a tension, a euphoria which can even be described as «intoxicating and mind-expanding» (Frederic Jameson). This is the complex scenario which the **Menna's Foundation – Contemporary Art Study Centre** intends to reflect upon through a **well-structured critical and expository project** focusing not so much on the final result of a work of art but more on its process – on the time each artistic creation calls upon and demands in a place as specific and full of meaning as a Museum.

***Imperfect Tense. Present-day Glances of the Archaeological Museum of the Province of Salerno*** is the title chosen for this exhibit series which will be presented from May to November of this year in the prestigious halls of the **Il Museo Archeologico di Salerno, one of the places most filled with the spirit of Salerno's old town centre**. The series is presented in collaboration with the Fondazione Filiberto Menna and the **sponsorship of DISPAC – the Science of Cultural Heritage Department of the University of Salerno** and the **Academy of Fine Arts at Macerata**. The project opens the series of initiatives commemorating the Fondazione Menna's **twentieth anniversary** and is curated by **Antonello Tolve** and **Stefania Zuliani**. Works by **Elena Bellantoni, Fabrizio Cotognini, Giulia Palombino, Gian Maria Tosatti** and **Ivano Troisi** – five internationally acclaimed Italian artists – will be on display for the very first time and in harmony with the Museum's illustrious collection and its luminous architecture, redesigned with great sensitivity by architect **Ezio De Felice** during the 1960s.

Five works of art created specifically for the occasion will be presented: temporal aesthetic alterations intended to re-read the past and to interact with the exhibit space which sustains the imperfection of time, its declinations and its elusive diversification. **The installations will all be created by the artists exclusively *in situ*** who will employ different artistic idioms such as **video art, photography, painting, ready-made and performance extroflection** to introduce an interpretation of the context (the Museum, in this case) as a place of preservation as well as a place that produces memories and – as a public place – lives in relation to the community and in harmony with the spectators who are closer and closer to the exhibit system.

**During the inauguration of each exhibit in the series, each artist will participate in a critical conversation** dedicated to his or her artistic quest and the reasons behind the creation of the project for the Provincial Archaeological Museum.

**Educational activities** for elementary schoolchildren **supervised by the Menna's Foundation** (directed by **Silvia Vicinanza**) **in collaboration with the ARTEXA Association** will accompany the exhibit project.

At the end of the exhibit series, there will be a round table hosting critics, art and architecture historians, archaeologists and artists who will discuss aspects and issues linked to the relationship between the past and present day art. A book will be presented for the occasion featuring the critical material and documentation of the works displayed in the *Imperfect tense* project.

The project ***Imperfect Tense*** is **supported** by the **DISPAC – the Science of Cultural Heritage Department of the University of Salerno** and the **Academy of Fine Arts at Macerata**. **Technical supporters | Associazione ArteXa, Fonderie culturali, Modula srl and Eusebi Arredamenti.**

## **EXHIBITIONS CALENDAR**

*Imperfect tense. Present-day Glances of the Archaeological Museum of the Province of Salerno*

**FABRIZIO COTOGNINI**

Opening Wednesday, May 7, finissage Saturday, June 7

**GIULIA PALOMBINO**

Opening Wednesday, June 11, finissage Friday, July 11

**ELENA BELLANTONI**

Opening Wednesday, July 16, finissage Saturday, September 6

**GIAN MARIA TOSATTI**

Opening Wednesday, September 10, finissage Friday, October 10

**IVANO TROISI**

Opening Wednesday, October 15, finissage Saturday, November 15

## **THE REMEMBRANCE OF THE PAST**

**The languages of contemporary art in dialogue with archeology  
Study Day | November 2014**