

The exhibition Nel Mezzo Del Mezzo is dedicated to the memory, sacrifice and courage of the archaeologist Khaled al- Asaad, brutally murdered by the IS. He stood up for Mediterranean art and culture until the very end, transmitting eternal values to the world.

The Mediterranean sea has been a crossroads of cultures and exchanges for centuries. Cradle of Western myths, Mediterranean is now undergoing deep changes and even goes through major socio-political upheaval. The migration phenomenon, rewarding historical process, has become a tragic concern in contemporary Sicily. Aware of that specific context, the exhibition **Nel Mezzo del Mezzo** will both question the very notion of centre (as Mediterranean sea means literally «the sea in the middle of the lands») and try to highlight common characteristics.

Mediterranean culture has indeed been molded by the ancient greek interplay between the Appollonian and the Dionysian. The Appollonian rests on reason, science and knowledge whereas the Dionysian celebrates pleasures, instincts, and possibly destruction. The show will reflect those dialectical tensions and draw a mosaic of forms shifting back and forth from abstraction to the body, from materiality to transcendence, from politics to daily life. This polyphony will be the starting point of an intellectual journey, questioning the dynamics of trade, migration and conflict, lying at the heart of this unique melting pot of people, products and techniques.

The show will present 87 artists from the 60s to now, in four exhibition spaces all located in the same area. The viewer will wander between Museo Riso (2000m²), Albergo dei Poveri (3000m²), Palazzo Sant'Elia and Cappella dell'Incoronazione. The hanging will develop at a rhythmic pace conducted by unexpected clashes between works. The Sicilian group Forma 1 (Accardi, Sanfilippo, **Consagra** etc.) will for instance face lebanese abstraction (**Choucair**, Adnan, Caland). Both working on land products, the Sardinian Maria Lai will be presented close to Luca Francesconi.

The legacy of Alberto Burri and his famous “Cretto” in Gibellina will echo contemporary pieces by Raphaël Zarka and Marzia Migliora. Spanish Carlos Aires and Italian Marcella Vanzo will both question intertwined forms of mobility such as migration and tourism.

Various artists will stage the motif of Stromboli, through objects (Giovanni Anselmo, Masbedo group) and films (Vittorio De Seta). Mediterranean land and sea will be contemplated not only as a physical territory (Emilio Isgrò, Michele Ciacciofera, Mona Hatoum) but also as a process driven by ever-changing practices. Music will be present in the works of Hassan Khan and Luca Vitone, not to mention Pinuccio Sciola's concert of lithophones using stones from Sardinia.

Christodoulos Panayiotou or Etienne Chambaud will point out the continuous influence of classical antiquity on contemporary practices. Rachid Koraïchi's installation and Younes Rahmoun Sufi work for the Capella dell' Incoronazione will introduce the sacred and enlighten the role played by religion in such ancient territories.

This exhibition organized by **Christine Macel** (Chief curator, Centre Pompidou, Paris), **Marco Bazzini** (art critic) and **Bartomeu Mari** (former director of the Macba, Barcelona, 2008-2015), after an original idea from the writer François Koltès and the artist Michele Ciacciofera, presented in the exhibition, hosted by Museo Riso (Palermo), wishes to respond to the Sicilian current context. **Nel Mezzo del Mezzo** will give an insight of Sicily's complex position, both central and peripheric, isolated and integrated.

Nel Mezzo del Mezzo will be an opportunity to discover, or rediscover, major historical figures such as

Maria Lai, Emilio Isgrò or Hidetoshi Nagasawa alongside contemporary figures. Recent works as well as new commissions (Mohamed Bourouissa, Benoît Maire etc.) will be presented for the first time. **The opening on Saturday October 10th** will be punctuated by performances (Gabriella Ciancimino, Kader Attia and Pinuccio Sciola among others).