

## **Mixed-material restoration and the art of Alik Cavaliere**

Works, restoration and debate

Alik Cavaliere and his work rediscovered through restoration in an exhibition opening Thursday 21 April at the Galleria Civica, via Campiero 1, Monza. The event is curated by the Co-Re cultural association in collaboration with the Centro Artistico Alik Cavaliere, Milan and the support of the Assessorato alla Cultura of the Comune di Monza.

The initiative has come about from a desire to bring to the public's attention not solely the great names from the history of art but rather, by also encourage an appreciation of works and their restoration. This objective has been reached by the exhibition of fifteen restored sculptures, on show together with the related documentation regarding their restoration. These works by this great contemporary artist present to the restorer, by their experimental approach to material, particular difficulties concerning their restoration. Cavaliere, trained at the Accademia delle Belle Arti di Brera under the tutelage of Manzù, Funi and Marini, is the interpreter of a profoundly innovative sculpture above all for its choice of materials and expressed in thematic cycles inspired by Classical works such as *De Rerum Natura* di Lucrezio and the mythological figure of Daphne.

The exhibition, designed by Sonia Micheletto and described for the visitor in a free booklet, starts with an analysis of the state of conservation of some works ranging from the 1940s to the 1990s which have recently needed restoration. The exhibition presents for each work the steps taken in restoration by the Conservatoio workshop, directed by Manuela Turchetti, appointed by and carrying out the restoration at the Accademia delle Belle Arti di Brera. Important works on show include *Omaggio a Tadini*, *Archivio Diario* and *Il Tempo* which typify Cavaliere's mixed-material technique and which unite mirrored glass, paper, wood and steel in expression of his artistic sensibility.

### **Conservatoio mixed-material restoration, Milan**

Conservatoio was founded in 1999 by Manuela Turchetti, who lectures in the restoration of contemporary art at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, Milan. Conservatoio carries out the restoration and conservation of contemporary works of art, artworks in mixed-materials, archaeological relics, modern artifacts while also working on occasion in collaboration with specialist scientific laboratories.

**Alik Cavaliere**  
**(Rome 1926 - Milan 1988)**

Alik Cavaliere studied at the Accademia delle Belle Arti di Brera, Milan under Giacomo Manzù, Achile Funi and Marino Marini to whom he became an assistant. In 1945 he exhibited for the first time, in a collective exhibition. After graduation in 1947 he held, in 1951, his first personal show at the Galleria Colonna in Milan. At the end of the decade he created *Giochi Proibiti*, following this with the cycles of *Metamorfosi* and the *Avventure di Gustavo B*, first shown at the Schwartz gallery and at the 1964 Venice Biennale, in a show specially dedicated to him.

**List of works on exhibition**

Personaggio  
Painted plaster  
41 x 72 x 25cms  
1949

Metamorfosi (sketch)  
Bronze, multicolored glass, tempera, beeswax  
28 x 37.5 x 32cms  
1961

Il muro e la mano  
Silver, bronze, cement, ceramic, steel, wood, plaster, glass, mirrored glass  
53 x 79 x 17cms  
1965

I processi (sketch)  
Wood, waxed wooden branches, plasticene, aluminum strip, steel, mirrored glass, textile  
100 x 100 x 120cms  
1971-2

Omaggio a Tadini  
Multicolored wood, painted glass, electrical system, brass  
90 x 65 x 210cms  
1976

Archivio (first part)

Multicolored wood, glass, mirrored glass, metal, textile, electrical system,  
manuscript, mixed collage

73 x 47 x 53.5cms

1980

Diario

Multicolored wood, bronze, glass, wax, mirrored glass, photograph, paper, metal

63 x 43.5 x 82cms

1980

Il Pigmalione

Wood, bronze, steel

100 x 34 x 30cms

1982

Il labirinto (Project #2)

Wood, porcelain, brass, copper, plastic, aluminum, bronze, cardboard, paper,  
colored pencils

100 x 32 x 41.5cms

1985

Il testo

Steel, bronze, copper, stainless steel

70 x 50 46cms

1985

La stanza

Wood, copper, brass, porcelain, acetate, Indian ink

90 x 32 x 41.5cms

1986

La traccia

Multicolored wood, mirrored glass, glass, silk, wool, satin, canvas, tempera,  
copper, steel

217 x 88 x 88cms

1986

Circolare o spirale?

Terracotta and steel

310 x 230 x 55cms

1987

Il tempo

Mirrored glass, glass, copper, brass, aluminum, iron, water

110 x 330 x 30

1987

Ippogrifi

Brass, copper

200 x 120 x 150

1993-94

In the course of his research, Alik continued to work on cycles; the first *Vegetazioni* appeared in 1965, inspired by the Lucrezio's *De Rerum Natura* and the mythological figure of Daphne.

The 1970s were a hectic period for exhibitions; he participated in numerous international shows, amongst which a new exhibition at the 1974 Venice Biennale. He subsequently came to view sculpture as a form of narrative journey in which materials could be used to create surreal landscapes: tangles of copper and grilles used to create “existential labyrinths” and journeys along the twists and turns of the mind. 1986 saw the *Percorsi* and the *Stanza di Pigmalione*, environments which required direct involvement by their spectators who were invited to enter them and lose themselves.

### **Centro Artistico Alik Cavaliere, Milan**

The Association was inaugurated on 16 October 1999 to collect and conserve in Milan the works of Alik Cavaliere: sculptures, drawings and sketches, paintings and writings. These, next to works of other artists as well as photographic and paper documentation have been collected to document the key moments in the artistic life of Milan in the second half of the twentieth century. The Association also guarantees access to the works and related cultural themes both by public exhibition and by a variety of cultural initiatives. The Association is currently developing an Alik Cavaliere Archive, drafting a general catalog of the artist's output that will serve as a comprehensive reference for the authentication of the artist's works.