

Press release

Giulio Paolini. Pavilion of the Dawn. A work in the Theater of the Castello

May 7 – July 25, 1999. Catalogue by Charta, Milan

Giulio Paolini's installation, *Pavilion of the Dawn*, is being shown in conjunction with the retrospective exhibition *Da oggi a ieri* (From today to yesterday), at the GAM Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Turin (from May 8 to July 25, 1999). In 1996 Paolini designed the curtain and backdrop for the Castello di Rivoli Theater; these were created and installed on the occasion of the exhibition entitled *Sipario* (Curtain), which opened in February 1997. The complex installation called for a final element, and the creation of *Pavilion of the Dawn*, added to the previous elements, completes Paolini's intervention, conceived expressly for the Castello Theater, utilizing the stage as a special site for his investigations.

Andreas Gursky. Photographs 1994-1998

June 4 – September 12, 1999; opening June 3.

Born in Leipzig in 1955, Andreas Gursky lives in Düsseldorf. Internationally, his photography stands out as some of the most interesting work from the 'Nineties. Gursky, like other very well known German artists, such as Thomas Struth, Thomas Ruff and Candida Höfer, was a student of Bernd & Hilla Becher, leading art world figures in the 'Seventies. Their teachings concerned the most neutral and immediate possible use of photographic means to record phenomena of reality, with an approach that is extremely depersonalized and objective. Gursky's work similarly aspires to pure recording, but he adds his own marked sensitivity for formal values, which tracks down the image and allows it to emerge. Methodologically, he employs frontal shots taken from a viewpoint that is higher than ground level. He has focussed in particular on the theme of the natural or urban landscape and has gradually moved from average size photographs to large-scale work. In his recent work, his eye dwells on the details of the subject, with the result that his photography seems almost like an abstract structure. This solo exhibition includes about 30 works, created in large format, which illustrate the artist's production from 1994 to 1998. Some of these images include the airports of Düsseldorf and Hong Kong, the Prada showroom, views of Athens, Singapore, Hong Kong and Brasilia, as well as images of various museums interiors.

A Project for the Castello – Alessandra Tesi

Curated by Marcella Beccaria. June 4 – September 12; opening June 3.

Progetto is a series of exhibitions that focuses on one or more pieces by emerging artists who have been invited to show their most recent work in the Sala Progetto of the Manica Lunga. Alessandra Tesi was born in Bologna in 1969, where she graduated from the Accademia di Belle Arti. Initially her creative expression centered on photography; she later branched out to create installations where she utilizes video projections and pictorial interventions. For Castello di Rivoli she has conceived a pictorial project that brings into the exhibition space the architectural traces of certain portions of the Castello that were never built. The installation maintains the Castello's innate tension as an "unfinished" place, visible only in part, a site capable of projecting in its visitors an image that is different from its actual appearance.

The Permanent Collection

The Permanent collection of the Castello, made up of over three hundred works, including paintings, sculptures, installations and a photographic collection, is considered unique within the panorama of international museums. In addition to presenting works, both by great masters and by artists representing the most recent movements, it provides the public with an opportunity to view works and large-scale installations conceived by artists expressly for the spaces of the Castello. The new installation on the first and second floors of the museum, includes ninety-eight pieces, both individual works and large installations.

Andreas Gursky

Born in Leipzig in 1955, Andreas Gursky is one of the most prominent of the German artists who use photography as their exclusive tool of expression. Along with other protagonists in this area, such as Thomas Struth, Thomas Ruff and Candida Höfer, Gursky attended the Academy in Düsseldorf and studied with Bernd and Hilla Becher, leading figures in the art world of the 'Seventies. From them, he learned to use photography in the most neutral possible manner.

Bernd and Hilla Becher introduced to photography a principle of rejection of esthetic effects and subjective interventions, in favor of pure visual registration of subjects. Then they systematically investigated these subjects on the basis of formal analogies. This approach was tied to the tradition of «New Objectivity»; the work was reproduced through simple frontal shots, neutral and detached, whether giving an overall image or dwelling on details of that image. The result was photography that was classifying in intent, applied specifically to architectural typologies such as shaft-towers, water tanks, refineries and furnaces.

From the beginning of his work as an artist, Andreas Gursky avoided the rigidity of classifications of analogous subjects; instead he has chosen to shoot images that are at times quite different from each other: panoramic views of the Rhine or other places close to Düsseldorf, the city where he lives; mountain landscapes; crowded swimming pools; railroad stations; waterfalls; terraces at the University of Bochum; factory interiors; or simply passers-by.

The common thread in this repertory of different images lies in the normality of the situations represented, which have nothing particularly unusual or singular about them. Nor is there anything out of the ordinary in the way they are photographed, almost always from a point above ground level. This position of the camera gives a greater sense of space to the overall shot and prevents the details therein from being organized into a hierarchical relationship.

Unlike his colleagues, who depict deserted scenes in their photographs, Gursky's places, whether indoors or out, whether tied to specific functions or not, are often inhabited, or in any case thought of as locales that are frequented by human presences. Indeed the artist has stated: «*The human being is central to my photographs, even when, in exceptional cases, the person is reduced to an invisible point.*» One could say that his intention is to expose the relationships between the human being and his environment, and the modalities by which social and geographical context give rise to and shape individual and collective behavior.

These characteristics of Gursky's photography are reinforced in his most recent works, particularly those from the past four years, which constitute the subject of this retrospective exhibition. Everything is accentuated in this work, from the dimensions of the photographs, all extremely large-scale, to the viewpoint, which has gone from an elevated position to, in many cases, an aerial view. In this way the landscapes, to which the artist has devoted most of his attention, assume an almost epic significance, since the view is expanded to embrace areas of great vastness that seem to heroicize the transformative relationship brought to bear on nature by human effort. Gursky rarely addresses uncontaminated nature and, instead, favors places such as the peripheries or parks of cities like Brasilia, Singapore or Hong Kong, or their «nerve-centers,» bristling with futuristic skyscrapers, or construction sites, factories, and airport runways.

The interiors that capture his attention are also an integral part of this technological and post-industrial universe. Indeed, they constitute a particular aspect of it, identified as thronged international stock exchange offices, or equally packed discotheques. Gursky sometimes chooses subjects that are made interesting by the light, whether natural or artificial, which is so distinct it renders the subject almost unreal.

This is the case in his broad nocturnal view of Athens, or the skyscraper that houses the Shanghai Bank in Hong Kong, or the discotheque where the large, luminous spotlight seems to descend on the enthusiastic crowd like an apparition, while the walls on which a large Pollock «drip» painting is hung seems dematerialized.

However the most striking thing about these photographs is the structural order on which they are constructed. It is almost as if the artist has overlaid the images with a grid, a visual scheme to which they conform. At times the artist uses a computer to modify the image, in order to make this scheme more prominent. It is present, at least as an underlying trace, in all the photographs, but it emerges to the foreground in compositions such as *Rhein* (Rhine), where the view of the river is shot as a superimposition of horizontal bands, or in *Atlanta* (1996), *Times Square* (1997), or the virtuosic boldness of a floor brought close to a ceiling, in *Brasilia, Sala Plenaria I* (Brasilia, Assembly Hall I, 1994), where the image approaches pure abstraction.

The formal cleanness of Gursky's photographs, their large scale, which reinforces the already perfect documentary rendering, finally seems to play a precise role, that of emphasizing, in the images, their quality as social signs, that is as elements that connote the most emblematic lifestyles of our contemporary being.

Works in exhibition

Brasilia, Plenarsaal I, 1994, 127 x 175 cm
Hong Kong, Stock Exchange, 1994, 166 x 226 cm
Hong Kong, Grand Hyatt Park, 1994, 226 x 176 cm
Hong Kong, Shanghai Bank, 1994, 226 x 176 cm
Yogyakarta, 1994, 135 x 175 cm
Athen, 1995, 186 x 186 cm
Engadin, 1995, 166 x 256 cm
Happy Valley II, 1995, 186 x 220 cm
Union Rave, 1995, 186 x 305 cm
Atlanta, 1996, 186 x 256 cm
Senza titolo III, 1996, 186 x 222 cm
Prada I, 1996, 134 x 226 cm
Rhein, 1996, 186 x 222 cm
Singapore, Symex, 1997, 176 x 276 cm
Singapore I, 1997, 186 x 236 cm
Ayamonte, 1997, 186 x 256 cm
Chicago, Mercantile Exchange, 1997, 186 x 249 cm
Chicago, Board of Trade, 1997, 186 x 242 cm
May Day, 1997, 186 x 226 cm
Senza titolo V, 1997, 186 x 443 cm
Senza titolo VI, Pollock, 1997, 186 x 239 cm
Prada II, 1997, 166 x 316 cm
Times Square, 1997, 186 x 250,5 cm
Bundestag, Bonn, 1998, 207 x 284 cm
May Day II, 1999, 186 x 226 cm
Senza titolo IX, 1999, 136 x 226 cm
Senza titolo VII, 1999, 186 x 224 cm
Ofenpass, 1999, 186 x 224 cm
San Francisco, 1999, 226 x 206 cm
Los Angeles, 1999, 205 x 360 cm
Bibliothek, 1999, 200 x 360 cm
Senza titolo X (Constable), 1999, 276 x 205 cm

Alessandra Tesi
The exhibition

Progetto is a series of exhibitions that presents a choice of one or more works by an emerging artist, invited to show his or her most recent work in the Sala Progetto of the Manica Lunga.

Alessandra Tesi is presenting *Interference Pearl (Perla Interferenza)*, an installation that not only has been conceived explicitly for the spaces of Castello di Rivoli, but also, taking the Castello's architectural layout as its point of departure, interacts with the history of the site. What distinguishes Rivoli from other House of Savoy residences is not so much the impressiveness of Filippo Juvarra's design, but rather the subsequent fate of the project, which was never brought to completion. Thus the Castello entered into history as an unfinished piece of architecture. The monumental main body of the Castello and the Manica Lunga the ancient Savoy picture gallery remain bearing witness to the original design. At the center, between the two buildings, there is an empty space where Juvarra had planned to erect the central building element for the future royal palace, a small Versailles, commissioned by Vittorio Amedeo II to celebrate his glorious reign. This architectural space, which bears traces of the project that was designed but never brought to completion, served as a metaphorical inspiration for the artist. «The plan that separates the Castello from the Manica Lunga,» Alessandra Tesi states, «is the design at the point where desire was placed in check.»

The artist's installation is located in the project room of the Manica Lunga, a room with one wall made up of a single large window, overlooking the Juvarrian atrium.

Alessandra Tesi echoes the «absence» of Juvarra's project, traces of which exist in the atrium paving. She has projected these on the walls of the room, through drawing and painting: «My intervention in the project rooms deals with this absence, created through a cosmetic treatment of the space. I am interested in what is not there, what has never happened, like the tension of a desire, an enormous potential for energy. Through its architectural interruptions, the Castello becomes a threshold, a boundary that speaks of a launching that never took place, remaining in a condition much more exciting than a finished state.»

The work has been created through the use of drawing and a specific type of «interference» acrylic paint that, seen from different angles, changes from one opalescent color to its complementary. Marcella Beccaria, curator of the exhibition, has written: «Tesi uses colors that are mutable, depending on the movement of spectators, capable of dynamically rendering the wonderment and artifice of Mannerist transformation. In other words it is 'make-up' painting conceived as if the setting were a skin covered with eye-shadow, skillfully shaded and mixed to accentuate charm and mystery. The folly of the cover-up as the artist calls it originates in this end-zone, to hold at bay a void capable of arousing horror.' This 'cosmetic' idea of the covering of space, heightening the folly that it implies, is central to Alessandra Tesi's poetics, and it is the subtext that links her photographs of hotel rooms or hospital spaces to her more recent installations.»

Alessandra Tesi Biography

Alessandra Tesi was born in 1969 in Bologna, where she graduated from the Accademia di Belle Arti. In 1995 she participated in seminars at the Institut des Hautes Etudes en Arts Plastiques in Paris. She lives and works in Bologna and Paris.

Her first solo exhibitions were in the spaces of Castello di Rivara and at the Paolo Vitolo gallery in Milan, in 1996. These shows, which concentrated on photographic works that emerged from the artist's encounter with «monochrome» environments, are documented by a catalogue. In 1997 a show of Tesi's work inaugurated the Spazio Aperto series at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Bologna; the show was accompanied by a publication.

Alessandra Tesi's interest in sites and the capacity of spaces to condition behavior led her to expand her work to installation scale. In *Le danger gluant de l'ordinaire* at the Musée du Papier Peint in Rixheim, France, and in *Tic de l'esprit* at the Galleria Neon in Bologna, both in 1997, she exhibited wallpaper designed as a shiny environment, «touched up» with interventions in nail polish. That same year, enamel painting also predominated in *Rosso D-R*, the installation she created at the Institute of Visual Arts in Milwaukee. In 1998 she exhibited *La Croce Verde* at Santa Maria della Scala in Siena, an installation that incorporated the nature of the setting, which was once a city hospital. This work is documented in a catalogue.

In 1994 the group shows in which Tesi participated included the *Biennale dei Giovani Artisti dell'Europa Mediterranea*, at the Corderia Nazionale in Lisbon and the Moderna Galerija in Rijeka, and *We are moving*, in Viagarini, Milan. In 1995 she exhibited at *Aperto '95/Out of Order*, at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Bologna, and *Il giovane ospite*, at the Casa di Giorgione, in Castelfranco Veneto. Alessandra Tesi's powerful work has gained her international attention, resulting in her participation in an important series of exhibitions. In 1996 these included *Prospect '96*, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, *Ultime Generazioni, XII Exposizione Nazionale Quadriennale d'Arte di Roma*, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Stazione Termini, Rome; *Jahresgaben 1996*, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt. In 1997 she participated in numerous group shows, including *Des historie en formes* at Le Magasin, Centre National d'Art Contemporain in Grenoble; *Fatto in Italia, Films and Videos* at the Centre d'Art Contemporain in Geneva, Institute of Contemporary Arts in London and *Officina Italia*, in the Cloisters of San Domenico in Imola. In 1998 she exhibited her work in *Subway*, in the subway spaces of Milan; *The Measure of All Things*, at the Ursula Blicke Foundation, Kraichtal, Rupertinum, Galerie im Traklhaus, Salzburg; *Fuori Uso '98/Opera nuova*, Pescara; *Côté Sud...Entschldigung*, Institut d'Art Contemporain, FRAC Rhône Alpes-Le Nouveau Musée, Villeurbanne and *La Ferme du Boisson*, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Noisiel; *Da Bologna*, La Chaufferie, Galerie de l'Ecole des Arts Decoratifs, Strasbourg. During the past year the artist has been involved with another series of exhibitions, including *Insight Out – Landscape and Interior in Contemporary Photography*, Kunstraum, Innsbruck, travelling to the Kunsthau, Hamburg, and the Kunsthau, Basel; *Clues*, at The Netherlands Media Art Institute, MonteVideo/TBA, Amsterdam; *Effetto Notte*, Associazione Culturale Napoli Sotterranea, Naples.

Alessandra Tesi
Interference Pearl

A Project for the Castle

A fine but rational thread, like that of Ariadne, marks Alessandra Tesi's journey. Her path winds, by preference, within spaces imbued with a sense of absence, places as empty as stage sets, momentarily abandoned but charged with an energy on the verge of being set loose. Her work is sustained by the full tension of the imminent that only an empty space can contain, but, as in the best thrillers, traces are scattered everywhere and there is the sense that some horror might be unleashed unexpectedly at any moment. The intense inter-relationship between persons and places traversed or inhabited is the theme that ties together Tesi's work. Her glance is continually held by the impression of bodies that mark the upholstery of a chair, by the traces that stain polished surfaces and by the shadows that persist after the protagonists have passed by.

The work *Interference Pearl* conceived for the project room (the Sala Progetto) in Rivoli's Manica Lunga has emerged from Tesi's definition of the Castello "as the drawing of an absence." Indeed the historical data that makes Castello di Rivoli unique goes beyond the grandeur of the design conceived by Filippo Juvarra for King Vittorio Amedeo of Savoy in 1718. Juvarra's project was interrupted while under construction, due to economic and political difficulties, and only one-third of the entire building as planned was constructed. The original portions of the Castello di Rivoli building, at least as we see it today, following skillful restoration, stop precisely where the ambition of the sovereign had to be confined, where the imagination of power was no longer able to impose order upon reality.

The history of this House of Savoy residence is displayed by the artist, who has used as her subject matter the void that separates the two buildings, the tension suspended between the building of the Castello and the Sixteenth century building of the Manica Lunga, partially demolished to leave space for the grand structure of the new residence. For Tesi, this void becomes an energetic and extremely high-tension field. "The plan that separates the Castello from the Manica Lunga - says the artist - is the design at the point where desire was placed in check." Tesi has taken possession of the plan that marks the position of the walls and piers designed by Juvarra, now visible on the courtyard paving. These never-built foundations were meant to support the most significant parts of the residence: the entrance atrium and, above it, the principal reception hall. The later was to have been a symbolic site par excellence, a space in which the exercise of power could manifest itself. In a play of *doublure*, Tesi has projected on the interior, on the walls of the space overlooking the courtyard that separates the Castello from the Manica Lunga, a drawing of what was to be, elements of the never-constructed plan.

Entering the room where Tesi has intervened is like gaining access to a private space where desires run simultaneously in different directions, still free from the necessary reduction that a confrontation with reality requires. *Interference Pearl* is like the interior space of an open shell, the iridescent walls of which retain luminosity, and where the interference colors are revealed, depending on variations in the light. In fact, the nacreous painting that covers the walls is traversed by the grid of the architectural drawing rendered in its aerial absence, leaving open some of the lines traced by Juvarra, like tracks launched into the void of infinite possibilities. The drawing is treated as an elastic material, acquiescent to the slant of the walls and discernible only when the space is traversed. Tesi uses colors that are mutable, depending on the movement of spectators, capable of dynamically rendering the wonderment of Mannerist taste for transformation.

In other words it is "make-up," painting conceived as if the setting were a body painted over with a cosmetic, which is shaded and mixed to accentuate charm and mystery.

"The folly of the cover-up - as the artist calls it - originates to hold at bay a void that is capable of arousing horror." This "cosmetic" idea of the covering of space, heightening the folly that this implies, is central to Alessandra Tesi's poetics and is the subtext that links her photographs of hotel rooms or hospital spaces to her more recent installations, where elements of the real space become an integral part of the work. The artist's eye is drawn to the way in which spaces stage themselves, to the way they define their function, disguising themselves in proper fashion. Yet control is rarely kept and the attention to detail becomes an anxiety about the covering, an extension of an arcane *horror vacui*, that horror of emptiness that leads to a decorative frenzy, which is also fundamental to the taste that defines the Castello. "Frescoes, decorations, stuccoworks, illusionistic geometric paving, mirrors, *trompe l'œil* - Tesi notes - line the space, making it a closed and enveloping 'bubble;' the castle must contain the world. In keeping with her osmotic approach to the places she encounters, in this installation Tesi's concept of "make up" assumes the form of painting treated almost as if it were a fresco. Like the frescoes that decorate the spaces of the Castello, this painting is capable of "breaking through" the space, moving beyond the heavy concreteness of ceilings and walls, with skillful artifice.

Accentuating the unfinished quality of the existing architectural grid, "the made-up room" also brings together within itself the technique of suspension (another secret of Baroque magic) and the idea of suspense, which ties Alessandra Tesi's work to the atmosphere of contemporary cinema. Scanning the grid traced by the artist over the walls is like traversing the two-dimensional space of a film, penetrating its surface with one's body. Thus one enters a total space, getting to the center of the labyrinth indicated in the geometry of the architectural layout.

There are two variants of the myth of the labyrinth. In the first, Ariadne gives Theseus a spindle with the thread. In the second, she helps him, lighting his path with a glowing wreath, conquering the darkness, which in this version constituted the true complexity of the site. Alessandra Tesi's work is a space where light plays a fundamental role in its capacity to reveal the convolutions of the layout. An abstraction of difficulty, a project that begins with a lack, this work, with its lustrous presence, contemplates the possibility of deciphering, a liberating solution that allows a way out, past the obstacles encountered along the way.

Marcella Beccaria

Academies for Europe

For some time, the Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art has worked with its Education Department, creating initiatives that involve the primary participation of educational institutions. Within this context, the role of the academies, both in Italy and the rest of Europe, assumes particular importance. In order to encourage exchanges between the various experiences, the Education Department is promoting

Academies for Europe

This initiative shall take the form of a series of annual meetings between academies or universities with an arts focus, in Italy and abroad. The first event, organized in collaboration with the *Centre Culturel Français de Turin*, will involve *énsb-a, école nationale supérieure des beaux-arts* in Paris. The program will include:

Conference

Tuesday, June 8, Sala Polivalente, Manica Lunga

10:00 a.m., sessions open, with Clara Palmas, President of Castello di Rivoli, presiding. *The Role of the Academies in Contemporary Life*. Panel participants: Alfred Pacquement, Director, *énsb-a*; Fernando De Filippi, Director, Accademia di Brera; Carlo Giuliano, Director, Accademia Albertina; Massimo Melotti, Management Consultant, Castello di Rivoli; Bernard Piffaretti, Lecturer, *énsb-a*; Giovanni Maria Accame, Lecturer, Accademia di Brera; Rolando Bellini, Lecturer, Accademia Albertina.

2:30 p.m., *The Status of Academy Students*. Roundtable discussion with Christian Boltanski, Lecturer, *énsb-a*; Jany Bourdais, Director, Centre Culturel Français de Turin; Mathilde Ferrer, Lecturer, *énsb-a*; Marco Meneguzzo, Lecturer, Accademia di Brera; Giuseppe Penone, Lecturer, *énsb-a*; Angelo Schwarz, Lecturer, Accademia Albertina.

In addition to French invitees, students from Italian academies also will participate in the conference.

Group exhibition, *énsb-a* students

Opening Tuesday, June 8, 7:00 p.m. Exhibition June 9 – June 27.

Giamperio Leo, Cultural Commissioner, Piedmont Region, will open the group exhibition of 17 *énsb-a* students, in the exterior spaces of the Manica Lunga.

If you are interested in the topics covered, you are welcome to attend the conference and the opening of the exhibition.

Please confirm with the conference secretary: tel. 011-9565-212/213.

Education Department