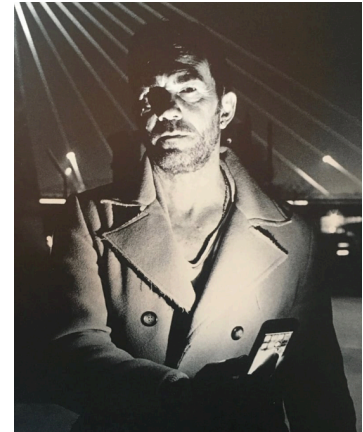




MICHELE TOMBOLINI



Born in Venice in 1963. Lives and works in Venice.

Michele Tombolini's research ranges in different fields, from painting to sculpture, from installations to performance. His initial pictorial style originates from introspective research that makes the bursting instinct its most characteristic aspect; his material style is inspired by the great masters of the twentieth century, from Picasso to the great upheavals of the Transavanguardia.

On the occasion of his participation with a video at Personal Structures in Palazzo Bembo, during the 55. International Art Exhibition -The Venice Biennale (2013), Michele Tombolini lays the foundations for a change, turning his research towards an increasingly conceptual approach, where the idea and the social message are the protagonist.

In 2014 the artist moved to Berlin where he created *Butterfly*, an interactive mural, on the facade of a building in the centre of East Berlin. The monumental work, of 30 m, is part of the international project *Indelible Marks*, aimed at raising public awareness of the great problem of child prostitution in the world and child abuse.

Butterfly, depicting a little girl in black and white with her mouth covered by a patch but with blue butterfly wings, represents the beginning of a revolution in the language of the artist in which an element of positivity, represented by bright colours, is inserted, as opposed to the greyness of the city, the degradation and the social problems that characterize the large metropolises.

The new artistic path of Michele Tombolini is characterized by an approach to the image that can be called Pop, while maintaining a level of further reading that is the messenger of a strong interest in social dynamics, the so-called Social Pop.

On the occasion of the Biennale Arte 2019, Michele Tombolini stands out for his installation *La Mendicante Griffata* leaning against the wall of the Academy of Fine Arts: she is a beggar with a covered face and a sign with the words "I'm hungry, help me". The destabilizing element is the presence of a designer bag and scratch cards scattered on the ground: is it a fake poor or a rich impoverished because of consumerism and contemporary social plagues? The installation of the dummy at various points in Venice was followed by an exhibition at Cà Zanardi with the projection of an artistic video with the reactions of passers-by.

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The artist has recently claimed responsibility for the intervention on the work of Banksy *Il piccolo migrante* appeared in Venice in 2019. Tombolini applied an adhesive X on the child's mouth, without damaging the work of the English street artist and removing it after 24 hours, to catalyse the attention on the theme of migration in Italy and strengthening Banksy's message. The closed mouth indicates the impossibility of migrants to explain their version of events and make themselves heard to enforce their rights, placing the emphasis on the delicate issue of illicit human trafficking in Italy, managed by the mafias.

In June 2021, in Mestre (VE), Michele Tombolini unveiled a new artistic project, X Square. A sculptural installation, located in the middle of the square of Calle Corte Legrenzi, conceived as a symbol of optimism and trust for all people hard hit by the pandemic and who still suffer from the economic and social consequences of this emergency. That presented in Mestre is the first work of a traveling project with which the artist will bring in the coming months his message of universal hope in the main squares of the world.

In October 2021 Michele Tombolini declared the authorship of the project *The voice OFF the planet* in collaboration with the group *Extinction Rebellion*: this is a non-violent artistic initiative dedicated to the environment, which saw the installation of paper-made skulls on the monuments of several Italian cities including Milan, Venice and Rome. The skulls represent the imminent death of the planet that sees us all responsible, but the shrubs and wreaths of pine needles and ivy leaves that come out symbolize hope in a change, in a rebirth of the planet. The X returns on the mouth, a symbol of censorship, the same censorship that the Venetian artist tries to fight in his works and installations, giving voice to anyone who cannot speak.

From 23 April to 27 November 2022 Tombolini has participated in the Venice Biennale with the Pavilion of the Republic of San Marino at Palazzo Donà dalle Rose with his project *Digital Humanity*.

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ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

SELECTED PERSONAL EXHIBITIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

2023

Site-specific installation of *Linea Interrotta*, work installed at La Questura di Venezia, in collaboration with La Biennale di Venezia, with the contribution of Cris Contini Contemporary and Prof. Pasquale Lettieri, Questura di Venezia, Venice

2022

I tuoi affari o affari tuoi?, installation at Piazza degli Affari, Milan

Giochi Adulti, Venice Times Hotel, Venice

The Great Nightmare, curate by Cinzia Lampariello Ranzi, Agostino Art Gallery, Milan

2021

Michele Tombolini X Extinction Rebellion, Installation "*The voice off the planet*", various cities in Italy

X Square, Installation-sculpture, Calle Corte Legrenzi, Mestre, Italy

Arazzi Animalier, personal exhibition curated by Simona Gervasio, Il Salotto di Milano, Milan

2020

Nocomment, Installation of an x over the mouth of Banksy's "*The Little Migrant*", Venice

2019

Contemporary art for the marginalized, Auction in collaboration with Christie's, Il Cigno Edizioni and Alliance for African Assistance Italy, Rome

Solo show curated by Elisabetta Scantamburlo at Hysteria Gallery, Milan

Exhibition "*La Mendicante*", organized by ITSLIQUID GROUP, curated by Luca Curci and Cris Contini Contemporary, Residenza Cà Zanardi, Venice

Installation of "*La Mendicante*" in different parts of Venice during the Venice Biennial

2016

Spazio Iqos forr Philippe Morris, Milan

2015

Indelible marks, Vecchiato New Art Gallery, Padua

2014

Butterfly, Installation at Krossenerstrasse 36, Friedrichshagen, Berlin

Beauty and The Beast, Green Art Asia, Hong Kong

Emerson Art Gallery, Berlin

2012

Vain Art Gallery, Mestre, Venice

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2011

E luce fu', Palazzo delle Prigioni, Venezia

2010

Painting performance, Galleria Berga, Vicenza

2009

Luce in Bioritmo Cromatico, Palazzo Michiel, Venice
Viola Gallery, Novara

2008

Parentesi Studia Gallery, Vittorio Veneto, Treviso

SELECTED COLLECTIVE EXHIBITIONS

2022

The Great Nightmare, curated by Cinzia Lampariello Ranzi, Agostino Art Gallery, Milan
Digital Humanity, project curated by Pasquale Lettieri for "Metamorphic Posthuman", Pavilion of the Republic of San Marino at the 59th International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia, Palazzo Donà dalle Rose, Fondamenta Nove, Cannaregio, Venice

2018

Al di là dei limiti, curated by Aurora Bolandrin e Flaminia Valentini, Villa Burba Rho, Milan
Noi no. Noi no, noi! La violenza no, group exhibition at Palazzo della Regione Lombardia, Milan
Cool-Air, Hysteria Gallery, Milan

2017

Spazio Tethis, Venice

2016

Serie *Butterfly*, Spazio TID, Milan
Contini Art Factory, Venice

2014

Spazio Tadini, Milan
ArtRooms, London
Intermezzo 21, Emerson Art Gallery, Berlin

2013

Personal Structures, Venice Biennial, Palazzo Bembo

2010

Santo Stefano Gallery, Venice
Viola Gallery, Novara

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2009

Barbara Paci Gallery, Pietrasanta Lucca

2008

Artvienfalt, Monaco

Missart, Limone del Garda

2004

Sette + uno, i sette peccati mortali +uno, Extendo Artis, Bassano del Grappa

ART FAIRS

2016

Precious7 Art Basel, Miami

2015

Art Fair Bergamo

2006

Miart

2002

ART-Innsbruck

2003

ARTMUC

2005

ART GENT

2004

Shanghai Art Fair

2004 – 2008

Arte Padova

Artverona

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