Triennale Milano

Francesco Vezzoli

IL PESSIMISTA NARCISISTA o IL NARCISISTA PESSIMISTA

February 22 – April 4, 2022

Triennale Milano presents IL PESSIMISTA NARCISISTA o IL NARCISISTA PESSIMISTA, a work of 2021 by Francesco Vezzoli, which will be installed on the mezzanine floor of the Monumental Staircase of Triennale where it will remain from February 22 to April 4, 2022. Made of Bardiglio marble and Michelangelo statuary marble, the work is a double portrait of the artist and entrepreneur Fedez. The installation is the outcome of an encounter between art and music, of a conversation between Vezzoli and Fedez in which Vezzoli interpreted some of the themes that appear in Disumano, the singer’s new album, for which the work itself later became the cover, with a shot by the photographer Delfino Sisto Legnani.

On April 4, 2022 at 6.30 p.m. the work will be auctioned in collaboration with Sotheby’s at Triennale. The auctioneer will be Raphaelle Blanga, Senior Director, Head of Department, Contemporary Art, Milan, and the proceeds will be entirely donated to the TOGETHER TO GO (TOG) Foundation, along with part of the proceeds from Fedez’s album Disumano, for the construction of the new headquarters in Via Livigno, Milan. TOG is a non-profit organization founded in late 2011 with its headquarters in Milan. There, it has set up a centre of excellence, with a high degree of specialisation in the rehabilitation of children suffering from complex neurological diseases, in particular infantile cerebral palsy and genetic syndromes of mental retardation.

As Stefano Boeri, President of Triennale Milano, states: “When Francesco Vezzoli and Fedez suggested involving us in this project, we immediately signed up to it with great enthusiasm. We are happy to be able to show the new sculpture of one of the great artist of the present time - which will interact with the architecture of the Palazzo dell’Arte - and to be able to contribute to the charity project promoted by Fedez in favor of the multidisciplinary TOG foundation, a center of excellence in Milan, whose constant commitment to research in the field of rehabilitation of children affected by complex neurological pathologies is something we follow with great attention.”

In Francesco Vezzoli’s double sculpture, two strands of artistic research explored by the artist over the years merge and converge: a reflection on classical and baroque statuary - and on its pressing relevance in the present - and the study of dynamics linked to narcissism, the star system and the cult of celebrity.

From a formal standpoint, the use of a baroque language, a hyper-expressiveness in the manner of Franz Xaver Messerschmidt - a German sculptor famous for portraits where expressions are exaggerated, deformed, almost driven to caricature - emphasizes the duality of celebrity, always suspended between the public sphere - source of joy, bearer of love but also of constant claims for attention from the public and the media - and the private sphere.

The choice of Fedez as a subject is decisive for Vezzoli for him being a very recognizable, deeply polarizing and divisive figure. And if the subjects of classical and baroque sculpture were nobles, emperors, saints and gods, capable of feeding myths, legends, narratives and imagery, today, the new objects of admiration (and sometimes even of hate) are the new “public” characters, the new celebrities, those belonging to the world of entertainment, cinema, sports, who continue to feed new myths and legends.
Triennale Milano thus continues its tradition of creating a dialogue between the architecture of Palazzo dell'Arte and internationally renowned artists, from the statues of Leone Lodi and Mario Sironi from 1933 to Lucio Fontana's neon light for the 9th Triennale in 1951, *Piercing a Milano* by Corrado Levi in 2020 and the installation *Lo zoo di Enzo* of Nanda Vigo, not to mention the sculptures and installations located in Triennale's garden, in particular *I Bagni Misteriosi* made by Giorgio de Chirico for the 15th Triennale in 1973, an artist Vezzoli loved very much.

This is how Triennale Milano enables an open and inclusive experience of art, no longer limited to the exhibition spaces but also to common spaces, spaces of transition, aiming to reach all visitors in an even more direct way.

The Institutional Partner Lavazza, the Institutional Media Partner Clear Channel and the Technical Partner ATM give their support to Triennale Milano for this exhibition.

**Francesco Vezzoli**

Francesco Vezzoli (Brescia, 1971) lives and works between Milan and New York. He has participated in the Venice Biennale on several occasions: the first time in 2001, then in 2005, with a video entitled *Trailer for a remake of Gore Vidal's Caligula*, a reinterpretation of the movie *Io Caligola* by Tinto Brass, in which appear, among others, Benicio Del Toro and Adriana Asti and, again in 2007, with a video in which Sharon Stone and Bernard-Henri Lévy compete for the presidency of the United States. He also participated in the 26th Sao Paulo Biennial in 2004 and the Whitney Biennial in 2006. Vezzoli has exhibited in major national and international museums and institutions: the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York (2002), Castello di Rivoli (2002), Fondazione Prada in Milan (2004 and 2005), Tate Modern in London (2006), Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York (2007), Kunsthalle in Vienna (2009), Museum of Contemporary art in Los Angeles (2009), Moderna Museet in Stockholm (2009-10) and Garage CCC, Moscow (2010). In 2013 he was featured in three solo shows at MAXXI in Rome, MoMA PS1 in New York and MOCA in Los Angeles with the project *The Trinity*. In 2017 he presented at the Fondazione Prada in Milan *TV 70: Francesco Vezzoli guarda la Rai*, tracing the great wealth of television production in the 1970s. In 2019, the exhibition *Huysmans, de Degas à Grünewald sous le regard de Francesco Vezzoli* at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. In 2021, Vezzoli collaborated with Fondazione Brescia Musei on the exhibition project *Palcoscenici Archeologici, Interventi curatoriali di Francesco Vezzoli* and, also in 2021, he was the protagonist of the exhibition *Francesco Vezzoli in Florence* with two new sculptures in Piazza della Signoria and Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, becoming the first living Italian artist to create a site-specific work for Piazza della Signoria, creating a dialogue between contemporary art and the city's historical heritage.

**Fedez**

Fedez is among the most influential artists in Italian show business. With 76 platinum records, 7 albums to his credit, over 13 million followers on Instagram. In
June 2018 he was the youngest Italian artist to play at San Siro in front of 80 thousand people. He was one of the fugitives in the first season of the reality thriller Amazon Original Celebrity Hunted - Manhunt, which he won. Together with Chiara Ferragni, he receives the Ambrogino d'Oro 2020 for the commitment shown during the first wave of the pandemic in Italy, and in the same year he was also the main promoter of Scena Unita, the fund in support of entertainment workers during ongoing health emergency. In 2021 Fedez joins the 71st Sanremo Festival with Francesca Michielen. The song in the competition, Chiamami per nome, ranks second. He returns to Prime Video in April 2021 in the newly created role of referee and host, alongside co-host Mara Maionchi, for the first season of the Amazon Original comedy show LOL: Chi ride è fuori, while in December 2021 he stars with his wife Chiara Ferragni in the new Amazon Original docu-reality The Ferragnez - La serie. In late November 2021 he releases his new album Disumano, certified platinum, including hits such as Bimbi per strada (Children), certified triple platinum, Bella Storia, triple platinum and Mille, 6 platinum records. In February 2022, he returns to Prime Video with the second season of LOL: Chi ride è fuori, joined by co-host Frank Matano.