



Von Buren Contemporary presents

## *The Grand Tour*

Christmas group exhibition with works by

**Mattia Barbalaco Bato Justin Bradshaw Lorenzo Bruschini**  
**Lucianella Cafagna Pietro Capone Chiara Caselli Clamisart Alessio Deli**  
**Mihail Dinisiuc Luis J. Fernández Augusto Gadea Simona Gasperini**  
**Vittorio Iavazzo Michelino Iorizzo Gabriele Luciani Maiti**  
**Juan José Martínez Cánovas Charlie Masson Mario Mei Paolo Migliazza**  
**Kristina Milakovic Guido Morelli Claire Piredda Sofia Podestà**  
**Massimo Pulini Saro Puma Giulio Rigoni Agostino Rocco Vera Rossi**  
**Tina Sgrò Beppe Stasi Marco Stefanucci Hannah Ungaro-Pope**

Presentation text: **Raffaele Milani**

Organised and curated by: **Michele von Büren**

**Von Buren Contemporary**

Via Giulia 13, Rome

the exhibition will remain on show until January 31, 2024

*A man who has not been in Italy is always conscious of an inferiority, from his not having seen what it is expected a man should see.*

**Samuel Johnson**

**Von Buren Contemporary** is thrilled to present **THE GRAND TOUR**, a rich and varied Christmas exhibition inspired by a past era of travel and adventure.

Beginning in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was fashionable for wealthy families to send their sons on a tour of Europe to complete their education by introducing them to the art, history and culture of the continent and in particular Italy. This rite of passage was known as The Grand Tour. It generally included visits to Venice, Florence, Rome and Naples and would last months, even years. Many of the Grand Tourists – who later came to include women – would acquire paintings, sculptures, prints and other souvenirs during their travels, which would be taken home as keepsakes of a formative journey.

With the participation of 34 artists; a diversity of genres including painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, collage and ceramic art; and the recreation of a traditional Italian Quadreria (picture gallery), *The Grand Tour* will transform the gallery itself into an installation artwork so that visitors can immerse themselves in a festive, back-in-time experience.

Some of the artists, including **Mattia Barbalaco**, **Pietro Capone**, **Mihail Dinisiuc**, **Gabriele Luciani** and **Massimo Pulini**, use their formidable skills to deliberately evoke the formal world of an art museum or academy, while others - **Juan José Martínez Cánovas**, **Charlie Masson**, **Agostino Rocco** and **Beppe Stasi** - put their startling technique to a more playful end by revisiting works by the great masters with a contemporary eye.

Many of the works on show focus on the landscape. As a souvenir from their travels, Grand Tourists liked to purchase pictures of their favourite places, generating high demand for painters of Italian landscapes and vedute (topographical views). **Justin Bradshaw**, **Luis J. Fernández**, **Augusto Gadea**, **Michelino Iorizzo**, **Kristina Milakovic**, **Guido Morelli** and **Marco Stefanucci** explore various aspects of this tradition, while photographers **Sofia Podestà** and **Vera Rossi** capture sites that were a must-see for tourists, including the Palermo Botanical Garden that so enchanted Goethe (Podestà) and the impossibly romantic Garden of Ninfa with its flower-covered ruins (Rossi). **Hannah Ungaro-Pope**, meanwhile, bases her research on Goethe's idea of the Urpflanze - a plant archetype from which all other plants stem and which he hoped to find on his travels through Italy.

Collage artist **Simona Gasperini** and painters **Saro Puma** and **Giulio Rigoni** take a more whimsical approach to the theme with works in a highly illustrative vein, while artistic duo **Clamisart** examine the souvenir frenzy associated with the Tour with the creation of porcelain plates and ornaments.

**Mario Mei** and **Tina Sgrò** participate with evocative paintings of the interiors of Rome museums and churches, while sculptors **Maiti**, **Paolo Migliazza** and **Claire Piredda** focus on the human figure with creations in paper mache, resin and terracotta.

The world of mythology, a dominant theme in the artwork that would have been admired by a Grand Tourist, is the inspiration for the works of Neapolitan sculptor **Vittorio Iavazzo** and Rome painter **Lorenzo Bruschini**, while **Lucianella Cafagna** presents us with a large-scale portrait on paper of a young girl reminiscent of a Henry James or E.M. Forster Grand Tour heroine.

Looking outside Italy, Roman artist **Bato** turns to the ruins of Babylonia for inspiration while **Chiara Caselli** enchants with a series of postcard-size views of Bukhara, the ancient city of Uzbekistan.

#### **CHARITY ART RAFFLE**

Visitors to the exhibition opening on December 10 will have the chance of winning an artwork from the show. A total of three works will be donated as prizes in a charity raffle with money raised from the sale of the tickets going to **4Ukraine Humanitarian Aid**, a UK-based non-profit organization which collects and delivers aid for the children and people of Ukraine.