

Gioni and Cattelan: an Italian "Family Business"

Marco Piattelli Palmarini (February 17, 2012)



Yesterday night Chelsea finally saw the birth of the new "Italian" non-profit gallery by Maurizio Cattelan and Massimiliano Gioni. Family Business, Cattelan's first project as a "retired artist", is the new spot for emerging art in NYC.

Last Thursday, regardless of the rain, contemporary art followers in New York gathered at Family Business for the opening of "The Virgins Show."

Hosted in the front space of the [Anna Kunster Gallery](#) [2] in Chelsea, Family Business is a 100-square-foot exhibition space jointly ran by Maurizio Cattelan and Massimiliano Gioni.

The highly anticipated event was extremely successful: the mini-gallery was packed with guests until late evening.

It's not the first time that Cattelan and Gioni team up in a curatorial initiative. Between 2002 and



2005 they ran together [Wrong Gallery](#) [3] in New York, and are aiming to bring that same collective experience to their new venture at Family Business.

The opening of Family Business comes at a very particular time in both the artists' careers.

For Cattelan, it doesn't just represent the first project after his retirement, but a return to the New York scene after his recent retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum, "[All](#) [4]." Gioni, on the other hand, was recently nominated as the curator of the next Venice [Biennale](#) [5].

Marilyn Minter, curator of "The Virgins Show," decided to feature young artists – the "virgins," whom had never exhibited their artworks in NYC before – alongside well established artists such as [Laurel Nakadate](#) [6] and [Kate Gilmore](#) [7], referred to as "born-again virgins" in the show.

The idea of "virginity" perfectly represents Family Business' concept: an experimental platform dedicated to the promotion of emerging talents. In the words of the curator, the gallery will be "a place where friends and enemies are invited to present the works of artists they support and projects they believe in." With Family Business, Cattelan and Gioni aim at not creating yet another art gallery around the High Line. No artwork will be sold at the gallery. It is important to highlight the non-profit nature of the project, which is particularly meaningful when we consider that the gallery is located in the heart of Chelsea, one of the most important international centers of the art market.

It is too early to argue what the role Family Business will be on the contemporary arts scene in New York, but giving an unprecedented visibility to unknown artists the gallery is already responsible of making something extremely remarkable happen.

In a moment such as this, when the image of Italy is being reshaped and updated, it's hard for Italians not to pride themselves of Cattelan and Gioni's attempt at leading such an interesting and cutting edge artistic project.

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Links

[1] <http://iitaly.org/files/11329523694.jpg>

[2] <http://annakustera.com/>

[3] <http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2005/dec/21/art>

[4] <http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/exhibitions/past/exhibit/3961>

[5] <http://www.labiennale.org/en>

[6] <http://www.nakadate.net>

[7] <http://www.kategilmore.com>