



## **Padiglione Italia @ the Italian Cultural Institute of New York**

Iwona Adamczyk (October 11, 2011)

Now, until October 27th, La Galleria of the Italian Cultural Institute hosts an exhibit of works by two contemporary Italian artists: Gaetano Pesce and Angelo Filomeno.

It is not unusual for the Italian Cultural Institute to host such an exhibit, what is new is the project itself. For the first time a project, "Italy in the World Pavillion," became a part of Venice Biennale 2011 and opened the door for Italian artists and those of Italian heritage living and working abroad to join the exhibition, previously accessible only to those residing in Italy.

The creator and curator of Padiglione Italia, Vittorio Sgarbi presented the idea of this special initiative to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Franco Frattini and the Director of the Ministry's Cultural Department, Vincenza Lo Monaco, which they immediately embraced, giving it their full support. On the road to completion of this project, all 89 Italian Cultural Institutes of the world were involved.

The institutes, in collaboration with their local museums, universities and cultural organizations, have nominated artists to be included in the project and a panel of judges consisting of art critics and scholars under the aegis of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The commission has given 217 artists the opportunity to exhibit their works in the Cultural Institute that has nominated them, as well as to be part of the video documentary that would be projected on the wall of the Arsenale in Venice during the Biennale.

On October 3rd, 2011 the Italian Cultural Institute in New York City opened the exhibition of the two, now New York based Italian artists Pesce and Filomeno. Among many others, the ceremony was attended by the Consul Dino Sorrentino, the project coordinator Francesca Valente, Renata Rosati and Simonetta Magnani Cultural Attachés at the Italian Cultural Institute, one of the artists Angelo Filomeno, and sponsors: Murray Moss founder of Moss Design and Mary Sabbatino, Vice President of Lelong Galerie of NYC.

Francesca Valente introduced the project, its initiation and step-by-step route to completion, putting emphasis on the collaboration between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture and all 89 Italian Cultural Institutes located throughout the world. She expressed that the project "drew a map of Italian creativity abroad" and that its aim was to include and not to exclude as many artists as possible that have been active in the last ten years, as it was meant to celebrate the coinciding 150th Anniversary of the Unification of Italy. She drew attention to the importance of the first decade of a new century, which tends to be "creative and full of new ideas and stimuli."

Next to speak was the Attaches for Cultural Affairs and curator of the exhibit in the Galleria, Renata



Rosati who thanked everyone involved in the project's completion and gave the audience a brief introduction to the works of Pesce and Filomeno. A more in depth picture of Gaetano Pesce's work was drawn by an interesting speech given by Murray Moss, who, knowing the artist personally accentuated Pesce's influence on society and aim at social change.

He described Pesce as an open-minded and most importantly patriotic individual who "questions everything including his own deepest convictions." Subsequently, Mary Sabbatino presented the audience with background on the works of Angelo Filomeno, as she invited the audience to follow in the footsteps of the artist and "to look deep inside our own selves where we will find the world, we will find all of humanity."

Both exhibits are on view at the Italian Cultural Institute (686 Park Ave) until October 27th, 2001. The Galleria is open Monday through Friday from 10am to 4pm. Please visit the controversial Italia in Croce installation by Gaetano Pesce, an Italian architect and designer widely known for his multi-disciplinary works found on display and in permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, as well as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and many others. The downstairs gallery shows the impressive art of Filomeno, who combines traditional skills of embroidery and the use of crystals, onyx and metal to transport viewers to a world of beauty as he sees it, and invites everyone to what was excellently phrased by Mary Sabbatino: "see the terror that we find when we look within ourselves."

More info [on the Italian Cultural Institute web site](#) [1]

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