

Maniera Nera



Norma Mangione Gallery is pleased to present *Maniera Nera*, an exhibition curated by Francesco Barocco.

The mezzotint, has its conceptual starting point in the space that lies between the processing of the plate and the final print. In intaglio printing, the zinc plate is engraved and carved out to create furrows that, in their millimetric depth, already contain all the premonitory signs of sculpture, of which the print contains a memory. Of all possible printing processes, mezzotint – which is the focus of this exhibition – is the one that best epitomises the proximity between sign and sculpture.

The first documented mezzotint was made in 1642 by Ludwig von Siegen, the artist who is considered as the inventor of the technique. In his many experiments, von Siegen managed to reverse the normal process of engraving. In mezzotint the plates are processed when dry, with a dense web of dots that prints as black. Abrasive paper, scrapers and burnishing tools are then used to create a complete range of nuances and intermediate tones, all the way through to a polished surface which prints white.

A series of works made in the second half of the eighteenth century, when this technique enjoyed its golden age in terms of quality and popularity, are on show in the gallery.

The works of John Raphael Smith, Richard Houston, S.W. Reynolds and Richard Earlom, who were some of the greatest masters of mezzotint, are shown alongside a collection of works by Vija Celmins, one of the very few contemporary artists who have chosen to experiment with this technique. With unshakeable discipline, Vija Celmins makes her engravings waver imperceptibly between detailed photorealism and abstract rendering. Her works are striking for the meticulous work of exploring the surface of things – be it a cobweb, a starry sky or an ocean rippled by waves.

The exhibition is staged in collaboration with Matteo Crespi, Galleria Il Bulino Antiche Stampe, Milan.

Vija Celmins –
Richard Earlom –
F. Green – Richard
Houston – Elizabeth
Judkins – S. W.
Reynolds – John
Raphael Smith

4 March –
4 April 2015

Vija Celmins (1938, Riga, Latvia, lives and works in New York) has had solo shows in many museums and art institutions all over the world like Ludwig Museum, Cologne, 2011; Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2006; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2001; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; Institute of Contemporary Art, London, 1996; Whitney Museum of American Art, Los Angeles, 1992. She had several group shows in America and abroad, as in Hayward Gallery, London; Castello di Rivoli, Turin; P. S. 1, New York; Fondation Cartier, Paris, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles and many others. Her work is part of important public and private collections. She is represented by McKee Gallery, New York.

Norma Mangione Gallery
Via Matteo Pescatore 17
10124 Torino, Italy
Tel. +39 011 5539231
info@normamangione.com
www.normamangione.com
Tue-Sat: 3.30-7.30 pm
or by appointment