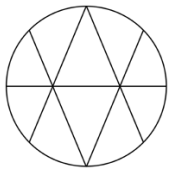


# MARCO TIRELLI

Escher Gallery

9 June - 14 July 2018



Axel Vervoordt Gallery is pleased to present a large-scale solo exhibition of the Italian artist Marco Tirelli (1956, Rome) in Antwerp, running parallel with the artist's small-scale exhibition at Axel Vervoordt Gallery Hong Kong. The exhibition consists of a body of large-scale canvases, most of them were exposed in the artist's solo exhibition in the Sala delle Pietre in Todi (Italy) in 2017. In the past years, Tirelli has exhibited extensively in Europe and abroad. In 2013, he was selected to take part in the Italian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale.

### Painting the Possible

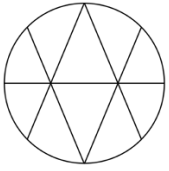
Space is pivotal to Marco Tirelli's works. He considers painting a rational and cognitive tool aimed at analysing our perception of reality founded in the reasoning of philosophers as varied across time and geographies, such as Plato to Kant to Leibniz and Nietzsche, which have come together to focus on space as a central theme.

According to Tirelli, an analytical reflection starts from our experience of the world and goes back to the subject as a condition of possibility distinct from that experience, revealing the all-embracing synthesis without which there would be no world. What is the relationship between the reality and the invisible realm?

Tirelli's metaphysical forms draw inspiration from the notion of representation and perception — as the optical transformation of figures in our vision, which lie passive within us like mere objects. In other words, the sense of perception is not readily available, it is more a phenomenon in our consciousness. It is thanks to the painter's gesture that our perception is converted into active action. The artist brings our vision to life by letting it emerge as such, giving back to the image all of its symbolic potential.

On a purely phenomenological level, Tirelli's geometric flowing objects relate to space as the universal power of their connections. In concreteness, space is not at all the area in which things are arranged, but the universal power of their connections. What makes Tirelli's works feel so conceptual, is their embodiment and articulation with spatial — the area in which moment can happen — making it strictly connected with time.

For Tirelli, ephemeral, yet three-dimensional figures are a sort of still image — a sequence of light appearing in the dark, like lightning. They are outward manifestations of the ways in which art is connected to the space. The argument behind this is that only the artist can render these apparitions monumental (In German, 'monument' is called 'denkmal', which means *sign of thought*; these are Tirelli's figures.)



Elaborating on this, his volumes look for deeper meanings by transcending the physical barrier of the canvas, attracting the viewer's gaze into the painting and taking him beyond the representation to imagine other places and other possible worlds. Tirelli states, "Things are not condemned to only be themselves."

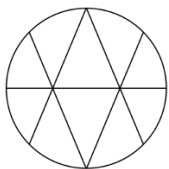
His images — dwelling between concreteness and conceptuality, tactility and mentalism, pictorialism and idealism, realism and symbolism — reveal what lies beyond. His forms are simultaneously merged in the *sfumato*, while dissolving in the architecture of the space. The shapes investigate the visibility and move towards the darkness of invisibility. They go after a fleeting, vibrating apparition, which the artist attempts to grasp on the canvas.

Dark and seductive, Tirelli's practice lives in its own world with its own syntax whose purpose is to raise a set of different philosophical questions. Indeed, Tirelli has sought inspiration from and paid homage to a list of great philosophers and thinkers. To explain the purpose of his art he turns to Giacomo Leopardi in *Zibaldone*, "Who can know the limits of possibility?" and to Henri Bergson, "...it is the real which makes itself possible, and not the possible which becomes real."

Tirelli's research tackles the immensity of this subject by challenging the physical reality and our perception of imaginary and authentic. Significantly, Tirelli's works most allude to Gottfried Leibniz and his concept of "Possibility" as expressed in *The Monadology*.

*For all bodies are, like rivers, in a perpetual flux, and parts are entering into them and departing from them continually. [...] These tiny perceptions, then, are more effective in their results than has been recognized. They constitute that 'je ne sais quoi', those flavours, those images of sensible qualities, vivid in the aggregate but confused as to the parts; those impressions that are made on us by the bodies around us and that involve the infinite; that connection that each being has with all the rest of the universe.*

(Gottfried W. Leibniz, *The Monadology* (originally published in French; *La Monadologie*), 1714)



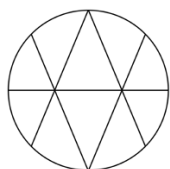
In line with Leibniz's philosophy, one can read Tirelli "oeuvres" like looking out of a dark window, where the infinite is possible. It is a landscape of perception that suggests a way of standing before the idea of infinity. The viewer is in balance between two ways of being possible: to remain static in this place and assume that the world is only invisible, or to open themselves to the infinite way of the possible.

Tirelli's geometries mirror the shadow of light on a dark background, an infinite column of cubes, a cosmology of spheres. They are threshold objects: they appear from the dark and in the darkness accompany us, like epiphanies of darkness, visual trampolines that allow the gaze to dive into the mystery of the infinite. Tirelli believes that art can act as a vehicle into a world behind reality, transporting the viewer away from the concrete into a highly "poetic" other world. You can say that the objects he paints are only a pretext to investigate the unfathomable, to bring his journey to the limits of time, the true protagonist of many of his paintings.

A striking parallel can be made with cinema where sequences in which things, objects, and people — momentarily out of range — could enter the scene. Likewise, things, objects, and people within the sequence must make us perceive their absence. All this is the sense of time and allow Tirelli to paint the possible.

"The world is everything that happens on the boundary between light and shade, everything that is and might be in my consciousness." (Marco Tirelli)

*This original text was written by Prof. Massimo Carboni. This text above was translated from the longer, original Italian version into English, with edits for content and space. For the original Italian version, please see the publication: Marco Tirelli, exh. cat., Todi, Sala delle Pietre, Palazzi Comunali, 2017.*



## Solo Exhibitions

### 2018

Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Kanaal, Wijnegem

Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Hong Kong

### 2017

Marco Tirelli, Sala delle Pietre, Palazzo Comunale, Todi, Italy

### 2016

Marco Tirelli, curated by L. Pratesi, MAMC – Musée d'art moderne et contemporain Saint-Etienne Métropole, Saint-Etienne, France

Marco Tirelli, curated by M. Smarrelli, Fondazione Pastificio Cerere (10 years Fondazione Pastificio Cerere), Rome, Italy

Sculptures and Drawings, OTTO Gallery, Bologna, Italy

### 2014

Marco Tirelli, Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium

Marco Tirelli, Galerie L&C TIRELLI, Vevey, Switzerland

Marco Tirelli, Osservatorio, curated by Ludovico Pratesi, Fondazione Pescheria – Centro Arti Visive, Pesaro, Italy

### 2013

Marco Tirelli. *Immaginario*, Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica – Palazzo Poli, Rome, Italy

*Memories*, Auditorium – Parco della Musica, Rome, Italy (in collaboration with Patti Smith)

*Soltanto un quadro al massimo*, Accademia Tedesca – Villa Massimo, Rome, Italy (with Bernd and Hilla Becker)

LV Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte della Biennale di Venezia. Italian Pavilion, *Vice Versa*, curated by Bartolomeo Pietromarchi, Venice, Italy

### 2012

Marco Tirelli, MACRO Testaccio – Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Roma, Rome, Italy

Marco Tirelli, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna, Italy

### 2011

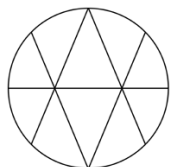
Marco Tirelli, Base Gallery, Tokyo, Japan

Marco Tirelli, Galerie Hans Strelow, Düsseldorf, Germany

### 2010

Marco Tirelli, Museo di Palazzo Fortuny, Venice, Italy

Marco Tirelli, Oredaria Arti Contemporanee, Rome, Italy



#### 2009

*Marco Tirelli* *Excelle/Intorno al silenzio*, Collezione Gori/Fattoria di Celle, Pistoia, Italy (with Anselm Kiefer)

*Marco Tirelli*, OTTO Gallery, Bologna, Italy

*Temporanea. Le realtà possibili del Caffè Florian*, Caffè Florian, Venice, Italy

#### 2008

*Marco Tirelli* – *Parallel Events / Manifesta 7*, Antonella Cattani Contemporary Art, Bolzano, Italy

*Marco Tirelli*, Studio Trisorio, Naples, Italy

*Marco Tirelli*, Galleria Bagnai, Florence, Italy

#### 2007

*Marco Tirelli. Verso il Ladakh*. Casa del Cinema, Rome, Italy

#### 2006

*Marco Tirelli*, *Œuvres récentes*, Galerie Di Meo, Paris, France

*Marco Tirelli*, Kro Art Gallery, Vienna, Austria

#### 2004

*Marco Tirelli*, OTTO Gallery, Bologna, Italy

*Marco Tirelli*, Galleria Plurima, Udine, Italy

#### 2003

*Marco Tirelli*, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, Italy

*Marco Tirelli*, Galleria Fumagalli, Bergamo, Italy

*Marco Tirelli*, Galleria Marilena Bonomo, Bari, Italy

*Marco Tirelli*, Studio Laureati Briganti, Rome, Italy

#### 2002

*Marco Tirelli. Das Universum der Geometrie*, Institut Mathildenhöhe, Darmstadt, Germany

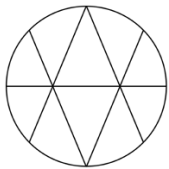
#### 2001

*Marco Tirelli*, Fondazione VOLUMEI, Rome, Italy

*Marco Tirelli*, Galerie Di Meo, Paris, France

#### 2000

*Marco Tirelli*, Base Gallery, Tokyo, Japan



**1999**

*Nunzio – Marco Tirelli, OTTO Gallery, Bologna, Italy*

**1998**

*Marco Tirelli, Galleria dello Scudo, Verona, Italy*

*Artisti al Regio, Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Torino / Teatro Regio (con Marco Gastini), Turin, Italy*

**1997**

*Luce –ombra – regola, Baldacci Arte Contemporanea, Milano / Gian Ferrari Arte Contemporanea, Milan, Italy*

*Marco Tirelli, Studio Trisorio, Naples, Italy*

**1996**

*Marco Tirelli, Base Gallery, Tokyo, Japan*

*Castellani-Tirelli, Galleria Extra Moenia, Todi, Italy*

**1995**

*Marco Tirelli. Il volto del pauperismo pittorico, Studio G7, Bologna / OTTO Gallery, Bologna, Italy*

*Marco Tirelli, Galerie Di Meo, Paris, France*

*Galleria Extra Moenia, Todi, Italy (with Enrico Castellani)*

**1994**

*Marco Tirelli, Baldacci Gallery, New York, USA*

**1993**

*La visione secondo Marco, Galleria dell'Oca, Rome, Italy*

*Tavoli e sedie, Galleria L'Attico, Rome, Italy*

**1992**

*Marco Tirelli, Galerie Hilgher, Vienna, Austria – Frankfurt, Germany*

*Marco Tirelli, Galleria Civica, Palazzina dei Giardini, Modena, Italy*

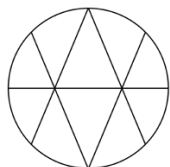
*L'Enigma dell'oggetto, Galleria Gian Ferrari, Milan, Italy*

**1991**

*Marco Tirelli, Galerie Triebold, Basel, Switzerland*

*Marco Tirelli, Cellar Gallery, Tokyo, Japan*

*Marco Tirelli, Galleria Alessandro Bagnai, Siena, Italy*



#### **1990**

*XLIV Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte. La Biennale di Venezia*, Giardini di Castello, Venice, Italy (solo space)

*Marco Tirelli. Raccolta del disegno contemporaneo*, Galleria Civica, Modena, Italy

*Marco Tirelli*, American Academy, Rome, Italy (with Sol Lewitt)

#### **1989**

*Marco Tirelli*, Galleria L'Attico, Rome, Italy

*Marco Tirelli*, Galerie Dörrie Priess, Hamburg, Germany

*Marco Tirelli*, Galerie Skulima, Berlin, Germany

#### **1987**

*Marco Tirelli*, Galleria Planita, Rome, Italy

#### **1985**

*Marco Tirelli*, Annina Nosei Gallery, New York, USA

*Capodopera*, Comune di Fiesole, Italy (solo space)

#### **1984**

*Vedute allo specchio. Opere grafiche*, Galleria AAM – Architettura Arte Moderna, Rome, Italy

*Pitture al buio*, Galleria L'Attico, Rome, Italy

#### **1982**

*Marco Tirelli*, Galerie Nicole Gonet, Lausanne, Switzerland

#### **1980**

*Marco Tirelli*, Galleria De Crescenzo, Rome, Italy

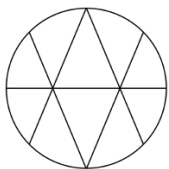
#### **1979**

*Marco Tirelli*, Bernier Gallery, Athens, Greece

#### **1978**

*Marco Tirelli*, Galleria De Ambrogi, Milan, Italy





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