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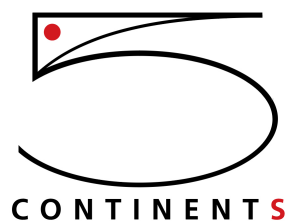
MATTEO PUGLIESE

This book offers a review of Matteo Pugliese's art over the past twenty years. The figures the Milanese sculptor creates are distinguished by their great power, revealing an inner torment that can no longer be disguised. The men depicted in his sculptures are all trying to break free of the wall that holds them, to throw off their limitations and assert their value as individuals in the hopes of escaping from dull uniformity and social and family expectations. These are people who are attempting to achieve a painful rebirth by struggling against materialised restraint—a wall—that seeks to prevent them expressing themselves, growing and therefore existing. The artist chooses to portray the moment of greatest effort, of supreme tension, the instant when a man regains control of his life and struggles against what is holding him trapped so as to restore a sense of purpose in his life. The carefully studied poses of his figures recall ancient models, in the same way as the material from which they are fashioned is also ancient. Luigi Spina's lens knowingly lingers on these figures' troubled birth and enables the reader, admirer, and art historian to acquire an intimate understanding of the sculpture and even to feel a part of the travails and manifest vulnerability that grip all of humanity.

Matteo Pugliese was born in Milan in 1969. He earned a degree in Modern Literature at the University of Milan in 1995 with a thesis on art criticism. His first exhibition dates from 2001, planned and organised by himself. His first solo exhibition was held in 2002 in an art gallery in the Brera district of Milan. Since then his work has been exhibited in over thirty solo shows throughout the world (New York, Rome, Hong Kong, London, Seoul, Brussels, Lugano, Capri, Antwerp, and Milan). Matteo Pugliese is married with one daughter and lives and works in Milan.

Gabriella Belli began her career in the Soprintendenza per i Beni Storico-Artistici del Trentino in 1978 in the department for the Tutelage and Cataloguing of Cultural Heritage. Under her direction, the new headquarters of the MART were inaugurated in Rovereto in December 2002. Since December 1, 2011 she has held the position of Director of the Fondazione Musei Civici in Venice. In 2013 she signed a new project for the exposition of the permanent collection of Ca' Pesaro. Since the early 1990s, she has personally designed and curated over 100 art exhibitions dedicated to themes and figures of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but also to architecture and design, including several large events with the purpose of offering a broad interdisciplinary interpretation of themes of interest in the study of modern and contemporary art. Today she is member of the Scientific Committee of the Fondazione Musei Civici in Brescia, of Villa Panza FAI-Varese, and of the Accademia di San Luca in Rome.

Luigi Spina is a photographer. His work depicts amphitheatres and the civic dimension of the sacred and explores the links between art and faith, the search for ancient cultural roots, and the physical impact of classical sculpture. His published works include *L'Ora incerta* (2014), *The Buchner Boxes* (2014), *Hemba* (2017), *Mythical Diary* (2017), *Sing Sing. Pompeii's Body* (2020). Spina has collaborated with Valeria Sampaolo and 5 Continents Editions to create the series "Oggetti rari e preziosi al Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli," whose titles to date are *Memorie del Vaso blu* (2016), *Amazzonomachia* (2017), *Centauri* (2017), *Sette sapienti* (2018), and *Zefiro e Clori*



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(2018), as well as the "Hidden Treasures" series, which now includes *The Farnese Cup*, *The Alexander Mosaic* and *Saint Dominic by Niccolò dell'Arca*. He has also published *The Dancers at the Villa of the Papyri* for 5 Continents Editions' "Tailormade" series. *Artribune* named him best photographer of the year 2020.