

PRESS RELEASE

GIAN MARCO MONTESANO

*La Canzone del male - Historikerstreit*

**Exhibition space:** Umberto Di Marino Arte Contemporanea - Via Alabardieri 1, 80121, Napoli, Italy

**Opening:** Thursday 15th May 2008 – h 8 / 10 p.m.

**Duration:** 15th May – 15th September 2008

**Opening hours:** Monday h 4 – 8 p.m., Tuesday – Saturday h 10:30 a.m. / 1:30 p.m. and 4 / 8 p.m.

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The [Umberto Di Marino Arte Contemporanea Gallery](#) is glad to present the first solo exhibition in Naples by [Gian Marco Montesano](#), *La canzone del male - Historikerstreit*, on Thursday 15th May 2008.

Starting from the German expression that has been literally translated with “quarrel between the historians” - well-known with the word Revisionism - the artist reflects upon the debate opened in Germany at the end of the Eighteens between Nolte, Hillgruber and Habermas, who are only some of the main actors of the debate. Beyond the mere historical interpretations what is more interesting is the creation of a new perspective, the purpose of which is to show that the Nazism and the Communism had much in common from the political and social point of view, especially for what concerns the communicative strategy, functional to the exertion of authority. *Historikstreit*, a work of 1982, opens the expositive path and introduces the research on the idea of evil, an argument the artist has dealt with from the beginning of his career, and that represents one of the most representative subjects of his way of thinking of art. The symbols of the two dictatorships, set one next to other in order to exemplify the false ideologies the two correspondent regimes were erected upon, suggesting the binary structure of the whole exposition.

In the space of the [Umberto di Marino Arte Contemporanea Gallery](#) twelve couples of boards, in a constant comparison one to another, reproduce the same number of German and Russian posters of the Thirties and Fourties. Through a faithful revision, in a fascinating travel around the history, the aesthetics and the iconography of that period we recover all the typical elements of the propaganda conceived by Hitler and Stalin thanks to the collaboration of experts like Goebbels and Ždanov. The social conditioning that was perpetrated playing on the expectations of the people of the two nations sensationally defeated in the First World War had a very important function in the tragic political happenings close to the Second World War. The revenge, the necessity of war, the sublimation to sacrifice oneself for the native country, the sport, the work, the technical progress, the illusory dream of a new world to be conquered at any cost are the stereotypes that appear clearly from this exhibition.

From some points of view the ideological manipulation of the people underlines the topicality of other communicative strategies, that are equally dangerous, because they expose us to the risk of an ideological levelling and a lack of critical sense. The choice of the subject and also the other one – very resolute - of the painting as artistic mean made by [Gian Marco Montesano](#) is to be understood as a profound reflection upon our time, or, more precisely, our cultural identity. If our contemporary European society arose from the collapse of the dictatorships, then to examine our past is fundamental to trace its contradictions and the critical state, throwing light upon a sound doubt always clear behind the fragility of our certainties.

Born in 1949 in Turin (Italy), [Gian Marco Montesano](#) lives and works between Bologna and Paris.

**Selected solo and group shows:**

- 2006 Fratelli, di quale reggimento siete?..., Emilio Mazzoli Gallery, Modena, Italy
- 2005 Annina Nosei, Gallery, New York, USA  
Bologna Contemporanea, GAM Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, Italy, curated by Peter Weiermair  
Prague Biennial, Prague, Czech Republic
- 2003 Femmes Absolues, Umberto Di Marino Arte Contemporanea Gallery, Giugliano (NA), Italy
- 2001 Emilio Mazzoli Gallery, Modena, Italy
- 1999 Studio d'arte Raffaelli, Trento, Italy
- 1996 Trevi Flash Art Museum, Treviso, Italy
- 1995 Still life, Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York, USA
- 1993 Aperto 93, Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy  
Pio Monti, Roma, Italy
- 1990 Galerie Lucien Bilinelli, Bruxelles, Belgium  
Köln Show, Galerie Esther Schipper/Galerie Sophia Ungers, Köln, Germany  
Personal portraits, Annina Nosei Gallery, New York, USA
- 1983 Buren, De Dominicis, Salvo, Montesano ecc., Galerie Trans/Form, Paris, France